

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515-4606**

September 29, 2020

Governor Kim Reynolds  
State of Iowa  
1007 East Grand Avenue  
Des Moines, Iowa 50319

Dear Governor Reynolds,

I write to you today in support of extending the registration period for the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Individual Assistance program, which is set to end on October 19, 2020, and encourage you to take whatever action necessary to request an extension.

As you know, the derecho ripped across Iowa on August 10, 2020, bringing hurricane-force winds with little advanced notice to families and communities and many Iowans are still struggling in its aftermath. The devastation was extensive and had a particularly severe impact on households and Iowa's utility infrastructure. The storm left hundreds of thousands of Iowans with damaged homes and without power, internet, or communication capabilities for several days, even weeks. While families impacted by the derecho have tried their best to navigate the process of filing claims with their insurance companies, homeowners and insurers alike are still overwhelmed with the amount of claims and appeals they have had to file.

To make this process more complicated, due to public health concerns created by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, FEMA conducted damage assessments virtually. This has stood to only further delay the process for households that did not have electric or phone/internet utility connections restored in the immediate aftermath of the derecho. FEMA's Individual Assistance Program and Policy Guide (IAPPG) outlines the process for requesting a 60-day extension of the registration deadline for the Individual Assistance Program and specifically identifies a prolonged loss of power as a significant barrier to registration and scenario in which an extension may be granted.

Additionally, the registration deadline for the Individual Assistance program is based on the date of the original declaration. While individual assistance for Linn County was approved within days of the declaration, Iowans in other impacted counties were left unsure if they would be approved. Given the delay between the Disaster Declaration on August 17, 2020 (FEMA-4557-DR) and the approval of individual assistance for ten additional counties on September 1, 2020, pushing the deadline would provide eligible recipients in all impacted counties adequate time to complete the registration process and access assistance.

A 60-day extension would help Iowans access the resources provided by FEMA's Individual Assistance program and help us move closer toward recovery as a state. As outlined above, the

situation in Iowa certainly fits the criteria for an extension and I hope you can work with FEMA to ensure aid reaches as many Iowans as possible.

I appreciate your continued work on disaster recovery in our state and urge timely consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Abby Finkenauer". The signature is stylized and somewhat cursive.

Abby Finkenauer  
Member of Congress

CC:  
Administrator Pete Gaynor  
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Washington, DC 20472

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