

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

October 6, 2026

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President of the United States
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

I am writing in support of the State of Illinois' request for a Presidential Major Disaster Declaration for Champaign, Cook, Ford, Fulton, McLean, Tazewell, Vermilion, and Will Counties following severe storms that impacted Illinois from August 11-16, 2026. The storms caused widespread damage across Central and Northern Illinois, and I urge your Administration to provide these communities with the federal assistance they need to recover and rebuild.

Beginning on August 11, a multi-day severe weather event brought multiple rounds of severe storms, tornadoes, powerful winds, and flooding to the affected counties. In McLean County, which I represent, the impact has been substantial. Severe winds and storms left behind fallen trees and power lines, flooding, and significant property damage. The Normal Fire Department responded to a record number of calls during a 24-hour shift, stretching emergency services across the area to their limits. In Bloomington alone, crews have hauled away more than 2,300 loads of brush and 500 tons of bulk waste in the weeks since the storm. Across McLean County, local officials have reported approximately \$42.5 million in damage.

A Major Disaster Declaration would give these communities the federal resources needed to recover, repair damaged infrastructure, and rebuild. I support the State's request for FEMA assistance, including Individual Assistance, Public Assistance, and Hazard Mitigation, as well as the request for an SBA disaster declaration to help eligible residents, small businesses, and nonprofits recover from the damage and disruption caused by these storms.

I have been impressed by the response of local leaders, first responders, and residents who stepped up to help their communities in the aftermath of these storms. However, the scale of the damage and the continued demands of recovery demonstrate that local and state resources alone are not enough. These communities have done their part, and now we need to make sure the federal government lends a hand.

Disaster recovery requires cooperation at every level of government. I respectfully urge you to approve the State of Illinois' request and ensure that the people of McLean County and the other affected Illinois communities have access to the federal resources they need to recover. I appreciate your consideration of this important request and stand ready to work with your Administration to support the communities impacted by these devastating storms.

Sincerely,



Darin LaHood
Member of Congress