

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

December 21, 2021

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We write in support of Governor Jay Inslee's December 17, 2021 request for a Major Disaster Declaration for the State of Washington as a result of the damages incurred by the severe winter storms, high winds, flooding, landslides, and mudslides beginning November 5 through December 2, 2021. We specifically support the request for Individual Assistance, which includes Mass Care and Emergency Assistance, Crisis Counseling Assistance and Training Program, Disaster Unemployment Assistance, Disaster Legal Services, Disaster Case Management and the Individuals and Households Program, for Clallam, Skagit and Whatcom Counties, as well as for the federally recognized Lummi Nation, Nooksack Indian Tribe, and the Quileute Tribe. Understanding that damages to public infrastructure are still being collected, we support any subsequent request from the Governor for Public Assistance and Hazard Mitigation Grant Program assistance.

Prolonged periods of heavy, widespread rainfall during the 27-day period resulted in 8-16 inches of rain above average, with some areas getting as much as 45 inches. This persistent and abundant accumulation of rainfall led to severe and sustained flooding, overly saturated soils, and water-logged trees, resulting in landslides. Flood waters remained pooled for weeks in portions of Northwest Washington. In all, 20 rivers exceeded flood stage, with many reaching major flood stage levels multiple times.

Statewide, an estimated 1,000 primary residences were affected by flooding with more than 300 sustaining major damage. The storms resulted in two fatalities, hundreds of individuals rescued, and more than 1,000 evacuations. There were significant disruptions to essential community services, utilities, and infrastructure far beyond 72 hours. Approximately 158,000 residents were without power at the disaster's peak. The severe storms caused substantial damage to hundreds of homes outside mapped flood zones with numerous uninsured home and personal property losses.

Locally, Whatcom County experienced the largest and most severe disaster in its 167-year history. As of December 16, at least 183 individuals were still sheltered in a mix of temporary housing and lodging facilities in Whatcom County. Whatcom County also suffered more than \$50 million in estimated damages to public infrastructure and private property. In addition, Residents in Skagit County experienced the worst flood in more than 30 years with near-record flooding in several locations resulting in more than \$7,850,000 in personal property damages and \$1,466,000 in damages reported by businesses. In Clallam County, the Makah Indian Tribe and several other communities became isolated due to extensive flooding, landslides and road closures, leading to food, water, fuel and medicine shortages.

Consequently, we fully support Governor Inslee's request for a Major Disaster Declaration for the November flooding and support any subsequent request for other assistance.

Thank you in advance for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Patty Murray
United States Senator



Maria Cantwell
United States Senator



Suzan DelBene
Member of Congress



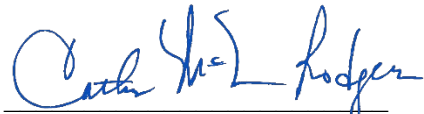
Derek Kilmer
Member of Congress



Adam Smith
Member of Congress



Rick Larsen
Member of Congress



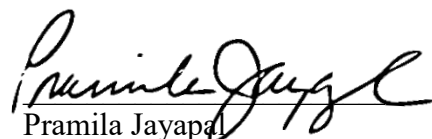
Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Member of Congress



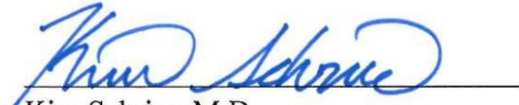
Jaime Herrera Beutler
Member of Congress



Dan Newhouse
Member of Congress



Pramila Jayapal
Member of Congress



Kim Schrier, M.D.
Member of Congress



Marilyn Strickland
Member of Congress