



RICK SCOTT
GOVERNOR

September 5, 2017

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

Through: Gracia B. Szczech, Regional Administrator
FEMA Region IV
3003 Chamblee-Tucker Road
Atlanta, GA 30341

RE: Request for Emergency Declaration
Hurricane Irma

Dear Mr. President:

Under the provisions of Section 501 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C §§5121-5207 (the "Stafford Act"), as implemented by 44 C.F.R. §206.35, I request that you declare a pre-landfall emergency for the State of Florida as a result of Hurricane Irma. This request is timely under 44 CFR §206.35(a).

I submit this request in anticipation of the impacts of Hurricane Irma, a Category 5 Hurricane that could result in a major disaster for significant portions of the state of Florida.

Based upon current forecasts and modeling, I request an Emergency Declaration for every county in the State of Florida.

I request Direct Federal Assistance ("DFA") in order to meet pre-impact, critical emergency protection requirements that are beyond the capability of state and affected tribal and/or local governments. Additionally, given the severity of the threat, I request financial assistance for Categories A and B under the Federal Public Assistance program.

I. The Situation is of Such Severity and Magnitude that Effective Response is Beyond the Capability of the State and the Affected Local Governments - 44 CFR §206.35(b)(1)

As of 8:00 a.m. today, Hurricane Irma is a Category 5 hurricane with maximum sustained winds of 175 mph. The five-day forecast cone from the National Hurricane Center includes almost all of Florida south of Orlando.

Although the National Hurricane Center does not forecast a Florida landfall for Hurricane Irma until later this week, the State and Federal governments need to work together now in order to reduce the threat of loss of life and destruction of property posed by this major hurricane. The failure to act now could have devastating consequences days from now for the residents of and visitors to the State of Florida. In short, immediate action is necessary as the emergency protective measures needed to deal with the threat posed by Hurricane Irma will take time to fully implement.

If Hurricane Irma makes landfall at the southern end of the Florida peninsula and travels all the way up the spine of the State, then the emergency protective measures could include large-scale evacuations. Given the population centers in these areas, these evacuations would require significant coordination and would involve large numbers of resources.

Regardless of whether Hurricane Irma makes landfall at the southern tip of the peninsula or travels up the eastern seaboard just offshore, the coastal communities impacted by Hurricane Matthew could experience significant storm surge.

In those communities, the coastal dunes serve as a critical barrier that protects evacuation routes like Highway A1A as well as the numerous homes and businesses located along the coast. As a complementary flood control system, numerous inland dikes and berms protect against rising water levels in the Intracoastal Waterway, the coastal lagoons, and the St. Johns River.

Unfortunately, those protective systems were either destroyed or severely compromised by Hurricane Matthew. To date, they have not been adequately repaired. Consequently, there is clear and present danger of flooding in the same cities and towns that endured the impacts of a major hurricane less than one year ago. If emergency berms are not constructed now, then additional, large-scale evacuations may be necessary to deal with the flood threats posed by Hurricane Irma.

Current forecast models predict that Hurricane Irma will:

- Head into the Straits of Florida as a Category 5 Hurricane;
- Make landfall somewhere in the southern tip of the Florida peninsula as a Category 5 hurricane; and,

- Travel up the entire spine of Florida;

I understand that, as the Governor making this request, I must demonstrate that the “situation is of such severity and magnitude that effective response is beyond the capability of the state and the affected local governments.” As a Category 5 storm with maximum sustained winds of at least 175 miles per hour, I believe that Hurricane Irma sufficiently makes that statement.

II. The Situation Requires Supplementary Federal Emergency Assistance to Save Lives and to Protect Property, Public Health and Safety, or to Lessen or Avert the Threat of a Disaster - 44 CFR §206.35(b)(2)

The NHC describes the potential damage from a Category 5 Hurricane as follows:

Catastrophic damage will occur: A high percentage of framed homes will be destroyed, with total roof failure and wall collapse. Fallen trees and power poles will isolate residential areas. Power outages will last for weeks to possibly months. Most of the area will be uninhabitable for weeks or months.

III. Confirmation That the Governor Has Taken Appropriate Action Under State Law and Directed the Execution of the State Emergency Plan - 44 CFR §206.35(c)(1)

On September 4, I issued Executive Order 17-235 and directed the State Coordinating Officer to execute the State’s Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan.

IV. Information Describing the State and Local Efforts and Resources Which Have Been or Will Be Used to Alleviate the Emergency

On September 4, 2017, the State Emergency Response Team (“SERT”) activated to a Level 2 - with Emergency Support Functions staffed on an as needed basis. As 7:00 this morning, the SERT activation level increased to Level 1 - with all Emergency Support Functions fully staffed.

Depending on the track of the storm, targeted evacuations could involve millions of people. Currently, models predict a possible Category 5 landfall in the Florida Keys (Monroe County) will a subsequent landfall near Miami (Miami-Dade County).

Monroe County has a resident population of almost 80,000 with a tourist population of many thousands more. Additionally, Miami-Dade County has a current population of approximately 2.7 million. North of Miami-Dade, Broward County has a population of 1.9 million; and, neighboring Palm Beach County has a population of 1.4 million.

V. Information Describing Other Federal Agency Efforts and Resources Which Have Been or Will Be Used in Responding to This Incident

On September 4, the SERT Chief requested that the following Federal agencies send a representative to the State Emergency Operations Center: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers ("USACE"); U.S. Coast Guard; and, the Federal Highway Administration. Coordination with other Federal agencies is ongoing.

VI. Identification of the Type and Extent of Additional Federal Aid Required

In order to save and protect lives, I request Direct Federal Assistance ("DFA") in the form of personnel, equipment, and supplies.

As soon as possible, I specifically request assistance from the USACE for emergency berm construction. Put simply, the amount of emergency berm work necessary to protect the coastal communities from flooding is more than State and local governments can perform during the limited amount of time available. Furthermore, many of the communities threatened by Hurricane Irma are still recovering financially from Hurricane Matthew. Additionally, the USACE has responsibility for several flood control systems in Florida - to include the Herbert Hoover Dike (which is in the projected path of the storm).

Also, in order to address current unmet needs within our State, I specifically request food, water, and tarps. At the State Logistics Response Center in Orlando, the State has over 300 truckloads of water and over 1 million shelf stable meals. Given the size of the population threatened by Hurricane Irma, however, the State will need additional emergency supplies.

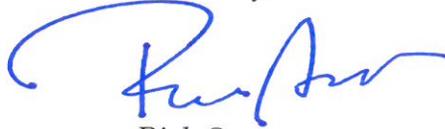
Finally, I request the immediate deployment of a Federal Coordinating Officer as well as a Federal Disaster Recovery Coordinator to the State of Florida; and, I may request additional forms of DFA as other life safety needs arise.

VII. Conclusion

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I have designated the Director of the Florida Division of Emergency Management, as the State Coordinating Officer for this emergency. He is authorized to provide any further information, assurances, requests, or justification on my behalf.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Rick Scott", with a large, stylized initial "R" and a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Rick Scott
Governor

Enclosures:
FEMA Form 010-0-13