



RON DESANTIS
GOVERNOR

August 21, 2020

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President of the United States
The White House
Washington, DC

Through: Gracia B. Szczech, Regional Administrator
FEMA Region IV
Federal Emergency Management Agency
3003 Chamblee-Tucker Road
Atlanta, Georgia 30341

RE: Request for Emergency Declaration
Tropical Storm Laura

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 in anticipation of Tropical Storm Laura. This request is timely under 44 CFR §206.35(a). I submit this request in anticipation of the impacts of Tropical Storm Laura, which as of the most recent National Weather Service forecast includes potential impacts throughout Florida. Based upon current forecasts and modeling, I request an Emergency Declaration for the following counties in the State of Florida: Bay, Broward, Calhoun, Charlotte, Citrus, Collier, DeSoto, Dixie, Escambia, Franklin, Glades, Gulf, Hardee, Hendry, Hernando, Hillsborough, Holmes, Jackson, Jefferson, Lee, Levy, Manatee, Miami-Dade, Monroe, Okaloosa, Palm Beach, Pasco, Pinellas, Santa Rosa, Sarasota, Taylor, Wakulla, Walton and Washington.

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 threat and the complication of the overlay of DR 4486 (COVID-19) to this tropical event, I request financial assistance for eligible Category A and B expenses under FEMA's Public Assistance program.

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
August 21, 2020
Page Two

Tropical Storm Laura originated as a tropical wave off the coast of Africa, becoming Tropical Depression Thirteen at 11:00 pm EDT on August 19, 2020. The current forecast from the National Hurricane Center indicates that Tropical Storm Laura will continue to strengthen and pass very near or over the Florida Keys on August 24, 2020, and strengthen into a hurricane prior to making landfall in the Florida Panhandle on August 26, 2020. Watches and Warnings from the National Hurricane Center will likely be issued for southern portions of Florida by August 23, 2020.

A storm of this strength has the potential to produce tropical storm force winds and hurricane force gusts along much of the Florida Keys and portions of South Florida. Tropical storm force winds could arrive in South Florida as early as Sunday night. Tropical storm and hurricane conditions are possible for portions of the Florida Panhandle Tuesday through Wednesday. Additionally, a storm of this magnitude on the forecast track could produce storm surge heights up to 2-4 feet above ground level along the Florida Keys, the Southwest Florida coast, and the Florida Panhandle coast. Higher surge values of 3-6 feet are possible in Apalachee Bay.

Rainfall amounts of 3-6 inches are forecasted from the National Weather Service for much of South Florida and the Florida Gulf Coast over the next 7 days. Higher amounts of 7-10 inches of rain are possible along the track of Tropical Storm Laura. Rainfall amounts over the past 7 days have been above normal for this time of year across the majority of the state, particularly in the Florida Panhandle. Due to the saturation level of the ground, a tropical system affecting this region of Florida could quickly create urban and riverine flooding conditions and cause trees to become more susceptible to downing from gusty winds.

The response to Tropical Storm Laura comes after 5 consecutive hurricane seasons in which the State has been impacted by multiple million, and in some cases, multiple billion-dollar storms, all while in the midst of the largest disaster event managed by FEMA and the State of Florida, the COVID-19 Pandemic/Public Health Emergency. Every jurisdiction in the State of Florida has responded to and is currently recovering from at least 3 federally declared events in the past 5 years, with most actively recovering from four events. All counties are currently under state and federal declarations of emergency for the COVID-19 event.

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
August 21, 2020
Page Three

In 2016, the State received a Major Disaster Declaration for Hurricane Hermine (DR 4280-FL) and 10 days later was declared for Hurricane Matthew (DR 4283-FL). For these 2 events State agencies reported \$43.3 million in expenditures. For Hurricane Hermine, FEMA has obligated in eligible costs over \$74 million and over \$490 million for Hurricane Matthew. In the 2017 hurricane season, the State of Florida received a Major Disaster Declaration for Hurricane Irma (DR 4337-FL), followed by Hurricane Nate (EM 3395-FL) shortly thereafter. Hurricane Irma was a category 4 hurricane that affected the entire State and resulted in the inclusion of all 67 counties in the Disaster Declaration. Following the Hurricane Nate declaration, Florida entered into a Host-State Agreement with FEMA to provide services to Hurricane Maria survivors from Puerto Rico. FEMA has since obligated over \$2.2 billion in eligible costs to jurisdictions to recover from Hurricane Irma; however, hundreds of millions in costs remain unobligated, to include emergency work.

In the historic 2018 hurricane season, the Florida Panhandle and Big Bend Area received a Major Disaster Declaration for Hurricane Michael (DR 4399-FL), a category 5 hurricane. State agencies expended over \$140.9 million in support of local jurisdictions and individual survivors. The FEMA Joint Field Office estimates that it will obligate over \$3.5 billion for this event, but only \$1.21 billion has been obligated thus far. In 2019, the State was declared for Hurricane Dorian (DR 4468-FL). While costs are still being formulated, the State estimates that the total obligated costs will be over \$181.3 million, with only \$8.6 million being obligated thus far.

For the COVID-19 Pandemic/Public Health Emergency impacts, state agencies are reporting approximately \$1,590,000,000 in expenditures, which does not include county expenditures. While costs are still being formulated, the State had preliminarily estimated the total obligated costs would be approximately \$1.4 billion. This amount will clearly be exceeded with the Public Health Emergency recently being renewed and the State still being heavily involved in response activities to the event. The overlay of this tropical event to the COVID-19 Pandemic will stress the capabilities of the State to respond fully to the tropical event without the addition of the requested federal assistance.

On August 21, 2020, I issued Executive Order No. 20-208 which directed the State Coordinating Officer to execute the State's Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan in support of the Order in accordance with Section 501 of the Stafford Act. At the

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
August 21, 2020
Page Four

time of this Order and this request, 593,286 Florida residents have been diagnosed with COVID-19, over 35,997 have been hospitalized, and 10,168 have died as a result of the virus. Sheltering operations during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency require that Florida consider additional strategies to ensure that survivors are sheltered in a manner that does not increase the risk of exposure to, or further transmission of COVID-19.

Evacuation and sheltering efforts in response to this tropical system will require regional coordination and longer lead times. A regional evacuation process will be used by state and county governments to manage and coordinate a multi-county evacuation. Medical evacuations and special needs operations are complicated by the additional safety requirements required as a result of COVID-19. Additional federal resources are needed to support such efforts. Emergency Support Function-8 has identified Assisted Living Facilities (ALFs) and Nursing Homes in the forecast cone who may need evacuation support as well as those in need of alternative power solutions to support their population should they lose electrical power. Alternate operational sites are also being researched and plans developed to address those ALFs and Nursing Homes who in light of the COVID-19 event, have to make nontraditional arrangements for their patients' health and safety.

With the uncertainty presented by Tropical Storm Laura's track, many counties are also considering evacuations, especially of low lying, vulnerable and special needs populations, but have not yet issued such orders.

I have activated the State Emergency Operations Center at a Level 1 in response to the threat of Tropical Storm Laura and the Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM) is coordinating preparation and response measures across the state. FDEM is also preparing to support operations upon request and activation of evacuation and shelter plans by the affected counties. Community Based Testing Sites for COVID-19 in the threatened counties are being deactivated and secured in anticipation of the weather event. Hospitals and ALFs are preparing for the possible loss of power, while at the same time experiencing increased patient census numbers and actively responding to the COVID-19 Pandemic event. FDEM is gathering resource needs from threatened counties and are planning points of distribution for not only critical resources such as water and food, but also personal protective equipment should the need for sheltering operations be identified. The FDEM is also identifying, securing and coordinating non-congregate sheltering (NCS) options for counties who

have a need to shelter those vulnerable to the spread of COVID-19. To date 149 such locations have been secured and stand ready to accept individuals who need to be housed in NCS facilities.

In order to save and protect lives, I request DFA in the form of personnel, mass care support, equipment, and supplies. Additionally, I request financial assistance in the form of reimbursement for eligible Category A and B expenses under FEMA's Public Assistance Program. Category A (debris removal) and Category B (emergency protective measures) support should be included in the emergency declaration to address the likely impacts of the tropical system. Specific to Category A, many of the threatened areas are low lying, coastal communities and are particularly susceptible to flooding and beach erosion. The mud, silt, sand, and debris that accumulates in these coastal communities will be significant should flooding result from this event as forecasted.

Emergency protective measures required as a result of this event will require extraordinary efforts of state and local government. With thousands of our citizens fighting COVID-19, we anticipate the need for shelters to be greater than usual, which results in increased resource requirements. Even healthy populations sheltered in traditional congregate shelters will require PPE and the implementation of mitigation measures against the spread of COVID-19 in such environments. Special needs shelters and isolation facilities will be used in greater numbers than for previous events due to the prevalence of COVID-19 in the State.

The State Emergency Response Team ("SERT") Chief requested that the following Federal agencies send a representative to the State Emergency Operations Center in support of these general capacities:

- Health and Human Services (HHS)
 - Mass Care support
 - Shelter support/staffing
 - Meals, water and food resources
- US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)
 - Damage Assessment support
 - Pump Capacity
 - Power Generation Capacity

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
August 21, 2020
Page Six

- US Coast Guard (USCG)
 - Technical assistance
 - Search and rescue support
- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
 - Technical assistance
 - Resource and response support

I have designated Jared Moskowitz, 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. I have designated Jared Moskowitz, Kevin Guthrie, and Allison McLeary as Governor's Authorized Representatives.

Sincerely,



Ron DeSantis
Governor

Enclosures:

Executive Order 20-208
FEMA Form 010-0-13

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY
Federal Emergency Management Agency
REQUEST FOR PRESIDENTIAL DISASTER DECLARATION
MAJOR DISASTER OR EMERGENCY

OMB Control Number 1660-0009
Expires 09/30/2019

1. Request Date Aug 21, 2020

Burden Disclosure Notice

Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 9 hours per response. The burden estimate includes the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and submitting the form. This collection of information is required to obtain a benefit. You are not required to respond to this collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. Send comments regarding the accuracy of the burden estimate and any suggestions for reducing the burden to: Information Collections Management, Department of Homeland Security, Federal Emergency Management Agency, 500 C Street SW, Washington, DC 20472, Paperwork Reduction Project (1660-0009). **NOTE: Do not send your completed form to this address.**

Completion of this form including applicable attachments satisfies legal requirements for emergency and major disaster declaration requests under 42 U.S.C. §§ 5170 and 5191, respectively, as implemented at 44 C.F.R. §§ 206.35 and 206.36. Failure to use this form may result in a failure to meet these requirements and/or a delay in processing the request.

2a. Name of State (as defined in Stafford Act 102, 42 U.S.C. § 5122) or Indian tribal government requesting declaration. Florida	2b. Population (as reported by 2010 Census) or estimated population of Indian tribal government's damaged area(s). <u>18,801,310</u>
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3. Governor's or Tribal Chief Executive's Name Ron DeSantis	4. Designation of State or Tribal Coordinating Officer upon declaration (if available) and phone number Jared Moskowitz, Director FL Division of Emergency Management (850) 815-4100
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5. Designation of Governor's Authorized Representative or Tribal Chief Executive Representative upon declaration (if available) and phone number
 Kevin Guthrie, Deputy Director, FL Division of Emergency Management (850) 294-8250

6. Declaration Request For: Major Disaster (Stafford Act Sec. 401) Emergency (Stafford Act Sec. 501 (a))

7. Incident Period: Beginning Date Aug 21, 2020 End Date _____ or Continuing

If requesting a "continuing" incident period, enclose an official statement from a qualified Federal Government agency acknowledged as a national authority in a specific incident field (e.g., United States Geological Survey for seismic incidents, the National Weather Service for flooding).

7b. Type of Incident (Check all that apply)

Drought Earthquake Explosion Fire Flood Hurricane Landslide Mudslide
 Severe Storm Snowstorm
 (rain, high water, wind-driven, rain, hail, lightning) (Must include Enclosure D: Historic and Current Snowfall Data) Straight-Line Winds
 Tidal Wave Tornado Tropical Depression Tropical Storm Tsunami Volcanic Eruption Winter Storm
 Other (please specify) _____

8. Description of damages (Short description of impacts of disaster on affected area and population). Include additional details in enclosed Governor's or Tribal Chief Executive's cover letter.

The forecasted track of Tropical Storm Laura could produce storm surge heights up to 2-4 feet above ground level along the Florida Keys, the Southwest Florida coast, and the Florida Panhandle coast. Higher surge values of 3-6 feet are possible in Apalachee Bay. Rainfall amounts of 2-5 inches are forecasted from the National Weather Service for much of the Florida Peninsula over the next 7 days. Rainfall amounts of 3-6 inches are forecasted from the National Weather Service for much of South Florida and the Florida Gulf Coast over the next 7 days. Higher amounts of 7-10 inches of rain are possible along the track of Tropical Storm Laura. Rainfall amounts over the past 7seven days have been above normal for this time of year across the majority of the state, particularly in the Florida Panhandle.

9. Description of the nature and amount of State and local or Indian tribal government resources which have been or will be committed. Include additional details in enclosed Governor's or Tribal Chief Executive's cover letter.

The State is working with counties and non-congregate sheltering partners to identify and secure NCS options in the event of evacuations. Resources are being prepositioned and shelter support materials, supplies, commodities and service contracts are being identified and activated. FDEM field personnel are deploying to the counties in the State of Emergency and medical and special needs shelter teams are mobilizing to assist. Evacuation and sheltering efforts in response to this tropical system will require regional coordination and longer lead times. A regional evacuation process will be used by state and county governments to manage and coordinate a multi-county evacuation. Medical evacuations and special needs operations are complicated by the additional safety requirements required as a result of COVID-19. Additional federal resources are needed to support such efforts.

10. Joint Preliminary Damage Assessment*

Individual Assistance Dates Performed _____ Requested _____ Start _____ End _____

Individual Assistance Accessibility Problems (Areas that could not be accessed, and why)

Public Assistance Dates Performed _____ Requested _____ Start _____ End _____

Public Assistance Accessibility Problems (Areas that could not be accessed, and why)

11. Programs and Areas Requested

Individual Assistance N/A Individuals and Households Program Crisis Counseling Program Disaster Unemployment Assistance
 All Disaster Case Management Disaster Legal Services Small Business Administration (SBA) Disaster Assistance

For the following jurisdictions, specify programs and areas (counties, parishes, independent cities; for Indian tribal government, list tribe(s) and/or tribal area(s)) If additional space is needed, please enclose additional documentation.

For States, identify Federally-recognized Tribes in the requested counties (if applicable).

Please see **Enclosure A: Supplemental Information for Individual Assistance** for additional information in support of this request*.

**Not Required for Emergency Declaration Request*

11. Programs and Areas Requested (Continued)

Public Assistance N/A Debris Removal (Category A) Emergency Protective Measures (Category B) Permanent Work (Categories C-G)* (not available for Emergency Declaration Requests)

For the following jurisdictions, specify programs and areas (counties, parishes, independent cities; for Indian tribal government, list tribe(s) and/or tribal area(s)). If additional space is needed or your request includes different categories of work for different jurisdictions; please enclose additional documentation.

The following Counties: Bay, Broward, Calhoun, Charlotte, Citrus, Collier, Desoto, Dixie, Escambia, Franklin, Glades, Hardee, Hendry, Hernando, Hillsborough, Holmes, Jackson, Jefferson, Lee, Levy, Manatee, Miami-Dade, Monroe, Okaloosa, Palm Beach, Pasco, Pinellas, Santa Rosa, Sarasota, Taylor, Wakulla, Walton, and Washington.

For States, identify Federally-recognized Tribes included in the requested counties (if applicable).
Seminole and Micosukee

Please see **Enclosure B: Supplemental Information for Public Assistance** for additional information in support of this request*.

Indemnification for Debris Removal Activity

I do not anticipate the need for debris removal.

I anticipate the need for debris removal, which poses an immediate threat to lives, public health and safety. Pursuant to Sections 403 and 407 of the Stafford Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 5170b & 5173, the State or Indian tribal government agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the United States of America for any claims arising from the removal of debris or wreckage for this disaster. The State or Indian tribal government agrees that debris removal from public and private property will not occur until the landowner signs an unconditional authorization for the removal of debris.

Request for Direct Federal Assistance

I do not request direct Federal assistance at this time.

I request direct Federal assistance for work and services to save lives and protect property, and:

a. I request the following type(s) of assistance:

- Health and Human Services (HHS) • US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) • US Coast Guard (USCG) • FEMA
- o Mass Care support
- o Shelter support/staffing
- o Meals, water and food resources

b. List of reasons why State and local or Indian tribal government cannot perform, or contract for, required work and services. The scale at which mass care support would be needed for congregate and non-congregate shelters requires the addition of federal resources. The USACE and USCG resources for large scale flooding and search and rescue support.

c. In accordance with 44 C.F.R. § 206.208, the State or Indian tribal government agrees that it will, with respect to direct Federal assistance: (1) Provide without cost to the United States all lands, easements, and rights-of-ways necessary to accomplish the approved work; (2) Hold and save the United States free from damages due to the requested work, and shall indemnify the Federal Government against any claims arising from such work; (3) Provide reimbursement to FEMA for the non-Federal share of the cost of such work in accordance with the provisions of the FEMA-State or FEMA-Tribe Agreement ; and (4) Assist the performing Federal agency in all support and local jurisdictional matters.

Request for Snow Assistance

N/A I request snow assistance.

Snow assistance for the following jurisdictions (Specify counties, independent cities or tribes and/or tribal areas).

Please see **Enclosure D: Historic and Current Snowfall Data** for additional information in support of this request*.

*Not Required for Emergency Declaration Request

11. Programs and Areas Requested (Continued)

Hazard Mitigation* Statewide **OR**

For the following specific counties, parishes, independent cities or tribes and/or tribal areas.

12. Mitigation Plan Information*

a. Mitigation Plan Expiration Date 8-24-2023 b. Type of Plan Enhanced Standard

13. Other Federal Agency Programs

I do not anticipate requirements from Other Federal Agencies I do anticipate requirements from Other Federal Agencies

Please see **Enclosure C**: Requirements for Other Federal Agency Programs for additional information in support of this request*.

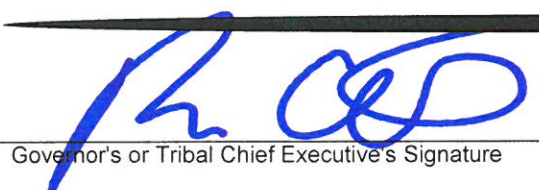
14. Findings and Certifications

I certify the following:

- a. I have determined that this incident is of such severity and magnitude that effective response is beyond the capabilities of the State and the affected local government or Indian tribal government and that supplementary federal assistance is necessary.
- b. In response to this incident, I have taken appropriate action under State or tribal law and have directed the execution of the State or Tribal Emergency Plan on Aug 21, 2020 in accordance with the Stafford Act.
- c. The State and local governments, or Indian tribal government will assume all applicable non-Federal share of costs required by the Stafford Act.

15. List of Enclosures and Supporting Documentation

- Cover Letter Enclosure A (Individual Assistance)* Enclosure B (Public Assistance)*
- Enclosure C (Requirements for Other Federal Agency Programs) Enclosure D (Historic and Current Snowfall Data)
- Additional Supporting Documentation _____



Governor's or Tribal Chief Executive's Signature

8/21/20

Date

If anyone except the Governor or Tribal Chief Executive signs this document, please provide the documentation that establishes that this individual has the legal authority to act on behalf of the Governor or Tribal Chief Executive.

*Not Required for Emergency Declaration Request