



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4006

December 4, 2015

The Honorable Nikki R. Haley
Office of the Governor
1205 Pendleton Street
Columbia, SC 29201

Dear Governor Haley:

Thank you for your letter dated December 1, 2015 requesting \$140 million in federal assistance to address housing needs resulting from the recent floods that impacted 42 of our 46 counties. I will work as quickly and diligently as possible to secure these funds through the Community Development Block Grant – Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) program. Federal assistance will also be needed in other states that have suffered natural disasters recently, and any funds appropriated will be available to all states with declared major disasters. I am concerned that emergency appropriations may move through Congress without providing adequate resources to meet my constituents' needs. I write to bring the following issues to your attention and hope to work with you to ensure South Carolina's recovery is swift and comprehensive.

Crop Losses

I have received correspondence from the South Carolina Department of Agriculture documenting \$376 million in damages from lost crops suffered by South Carolina's farmers. Since many of these farmers will never be made whole from any existing program, I will pursue additional appropriations to provide aid to farmers whose crops have been devastated and whose livelihoods are threatened. The drought this summer already deeply affected family farms across the state. As you likely are aware, crop insurance policies are designed to help farmers recover from one disaster, not two. In light of devastation from our 1,000 year flood event in addition to damages from the drought, I am sincerely concerned that many family farmers will not be able to survive for another year. As these farmers are the economic backbone of our state, I hope you will support my efforts to obtain these funds to ensure family farms are able to keep their businesses open.

Other Business Losses

Of course, agriculture was not the only sector of South Carolina's economy that was affected by the disaster. The University of South Carolina's Darla Moore School of Business released a study this week which measures the total economic impact to the state at \$12 billion in damages. That figure combines damage to property and infrastructure with major disruptions to business activity over the four to six week period following the floods. As an example, the tourism

industry was hit particularly hard, as hotel occupancies suffered up to a 25% decline in some of the worst-affected areas. The South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism has indicated that the floods cost the industry \$35 million.

The federal government can and should help local economies recover after a major disaster. Congress has provided funds for economic recovery through supplemental appropriations in recent years when businesses in other areas have been crippled by disaster. I look forward to working with you to quantify the toll of these floods on all our state's businesses so that we can seek resources to mitigate the economic losses the state has incurred.

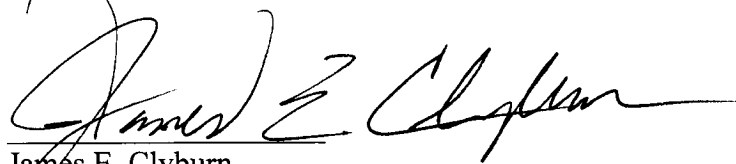
Infrastructure Damages

I understand from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) that our state's ports, beaches, and other flood control infrastructure suffered approximately \$78 million in damages that will not be repaired unless additional funds are provided to their emergency account. As you know, our beaches are one of the primary drivers of the state's tourism industry. In addition, our ports and other water resources support industry throughout the state and region. Damages to these facilities can only be recovered through Corps accounts. I would like to pursue appropriations to repair these resources as soon as possible and would appreciate your support.

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)'s Emergency Relief Program is obligated to reimburse the state for repairs to interstates and U.S. highways. The latest estimate from FHWA is over \$88 million in reimbursable costs under this program. Unfortunately, it already faces a backlog of over \$500 million in obligations from previous disasters. I fear that this lack of funding will delay the agency's reimbursements to the state and therefore deny the state resources that might be spent on other transportation improvements that I know are desperately needed. I hope you will support my efforts to obtain appropriations to address the backlog and make the \$88 million needed for South Carolina available as soon as possible to prevent disruption of maintenance and construction on our highway system.

I strongly believe that it is appropriate for the federal government to assist states and local governments rebuild communities and stabilize families following a major disaster. Your support for these efforts is needed. I applaud your leadership in organizing charitable entities to respond to South Carolina's needs; however, I am concerned by the misconception that philanthropic efforts are a substitute for the federal resources that South Carolina needs. I am fearful that unless you weigh in, federal agencies and Congress could direct precious resources elsewhere.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James E. Clyburn", written over a horizontal line.

James E. Clyburn
Member of Congress