

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 19, 2017

The Honorable Sonny Perdue
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Perdue:

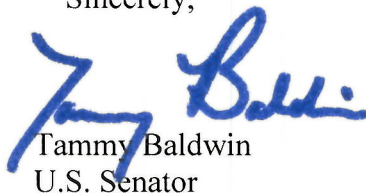
This week, a tornado and severe thunderstorms damaged dozens of homes, infrastructure, and several farms in various counties in northern and western Wisconsin. Governor Walker declared a State of Emergency for Barron, Jackson and Rusk counties and more than a dozen counties are reporting damage from the second series of storms that caused flooding and damage in various communities. As these communities respond to the damage and work to recover, I urge you to provide support to local U.S. Department of Agriculture staff to ensure that these communities and affected farms receive the full and prompt attention of the agency. It is imperative that these communities receive efficient access to all assistance programs for which they are determined to be eligible.

The tornado and severe weather caused losses of both structures and livestock on many farms within the disaster area. Furthermore, the second series of severe storms in Wisconsin the next day placed even more stress on many communities and farms.

If it is determined that these counties meet the criteria for a federal disaster declaration, I ask that you make that declaration as quickly as possible in order to facilitate the impacted farms' access to federal disaster assistance resources. Additionally, I request that the Farm Service Agency work closely with the affected farmers and devote sufficient resources to local staff to assist farmers in documenting property losses in order to apply for federal assistance.

Thank you for your prompt consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,



Tammy Baldwin
U.S. Senator