

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 28, 2018

The President
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

I write to request federal assistance for Wisconsin communities impacted by recent flooding in northern Wisconsin. Beginning on June 16, severe storms and flash flooding in northern Wisconsin caused widespread damage in Ashland, Bayfield, Burnett, Douglas, Price, Sawyer and Iron counties. The flooding caused damage to homes, businesses and public infrastructure, including federal highways and federally financed water infrastructure projects.

The State of Wisconsin and local governments are currently assessing the damage to determine whether the disaster meets the criteria for a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) disaster declaration. A FEMA disaster declaration makes critical federal funds available to reimburse local communities for needed damage repairs and recovery. Should Governor Walker make a request for FEMA to conduct damage assessments and seek a federal disaster declaration, I would strongly urge you to provide federal assistance and your full support.

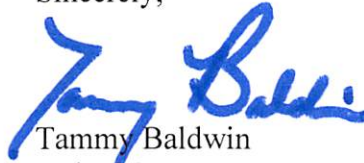
The flooding damaged transportation infrastructure and emergency managers were immediately at work assisting those stranded by flooded roads, mitigating impacts to road and bridge infrastructure, and assessing damages. As these communities work to recover, I ask that you work quickly to make federal emergency transportation funding available to Wisconsin to stabilize roads, including tribal roads and federally owned roads, and make permanent repairs to ensure that residents have access to safe and reliable transportation.

In addition, Saxon Harbor in Iron County sustained damage due to the flooding, which deposited additional sediment within the federal channel. The Army Corps of Engineers is working with the county to reopen the harbor following a previous natural disaster and it is imperative that dredging and any other necessary repairs to the federal structure is completed soon with the Corps' full financial support. Restoring the Saxon Harbor and its assets is essential to safe navigation on Lake Superior and the region's economic stability. I understand the Army Corps is currently working to survey the additional sediment while also working to repair damages and perform dredging from the storm that hit this area in July of 2016. If combining the work needed to recover from the 2016 storm and this most recent flooding would result in efficiency and cost savings, the Army Corps should consider doing so.

Finally, it is my understanding that Governor Walker has activated the Wisconsin National Guard, but has not yet officially requested units to mobilize in response to weather-related damage. Should the dedicated men and women of the Wisconsin National Guard be asked to assist, I request that the Department of Defense provide all necessary support—as appropriate to the duty status in effect—to facilitate recovery efforts.

Thank you for your attention and consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,



Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator

Cc: The Honorable James Mattis, Secretary of Defense
The Honorable General Joseph Lengyel, Chief of the National Guard Bureau
The Honorable Brock Long, FEMA Administrator
The Honorable Brandye Hendrickson, Federal Highway Administration Deputy Administrator
The Honorable Lieutenant General Todd Semonite, Army Corps of Engineers Commanding General and Chief of Engineers