



STATE OF FLORIDA

DIVISION OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Ron DeSantis
Governor

Kevin Guthrie
Director

November 21, 2022

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Through: Ms. Gracia B. Szczech, Region IV Administrator
Federal Emergency Management Agency
3005 Chamblee – Tucker Road
Atlanta, GA 30341

Through: Thomas J. McCool, Federal Coordinating Officer
Joint Field Office
636 Grand Regency Boulevard
Brandon, FL 33510

RE: Request for Cost Share Extension
Hurricane Ian

Dear Mr. President:

On October 4, 2022, you granted an extension of the 100% federal cost share for Categories A and B (debris removal and emergency protective measures) due to the devastating impacts of Hurricane Ian. The State of Florida submitted a request for your consideration on October 31, 2022, for an extension through December 21, 2022, and is still awaiting your decision. Currently, the 100% federal cost share expires on November 21, 2022. The State of Florida would like to request, under 44 C.F.R. § 206.47(d), FEMA provide an additional 30-day extension of 100% federal cost share for Categories A and B to extend through January 19, 2023. During your visit to Florida, you saw firsthand the devastation Ian brought to our communities, acknowledged that an extension past 60 days would likely be needed, and told the people of Florida that we would have the commitment of the federal government through this entire process.

The State of Florida has made significant strides with the response and recovery efforts for an event of this magnitude. The complexity of the storm-generated debris alone is of such historic proportions that FEMA, in partnership with the State, has implemented a first-in-the-nation approach to debris operations that include designations of catastrophically and extensively damaged areas. Many lines of effort were hastily delayed while the entire State prepared for and responded to Hurricane Nicole, approximately 41 days after Hurricane Ian made landfall, an event not experienced in Florida since the

memorable 2004 season. Damage assessments for Hurricane Nicole continue and have revealed severe impacts to the east coast, compounding the devastating effects in communities already reeling from Hurricane Ian.

The State of Florida continues to focus on innovative solutions for the multitude of needs for survivors and communities to include sheltering resources, temporary housing, home repairs, and continued debris operations and response efforts. With the holiday season forthcoming, the State will continue all lines of effort, however some delays will prove inevitable and beyond our control.

Debris and major flooding have blocked many of the arterial and local routes within the Disaster Area with flood warnings remain in effect for many parts of Florida. Riverine flooding caused by Hurricane Ian continues to interfere with response operations and prevents many displaced survivors from returning to their homes.

Despite this significant mobilization of resources, additional time is needed to provide relief for our impacted communities and clear the way for temporary housing resources. In many affected counties, public infrastructure still struggles to provide basic necessities for vulnerable populations, including long-term access to the barrier islands of Lee County.

Because of the catastrophic damage to the housing stock in Southwest Florida, the State was approved to conduct Non-Congregate Sheltering using travel-trailers and recreational vehicles to provide temporary safe and sanitary housing for survivors. Additionally, the State is awaiting consideration of a program to assist with temporary home repairs to allow survivors to remain in their homes and communities.

Extensive Search and Rescue operations in Lee County and other heavily impacted areas delayed other much needed emergency work such as debris removal, the procurement of temporary structures, the reopening and critical community lifelines and more. Despite a coordinated effort between all levels of government, current estimates exceed tens of billions of dollars in damages and debris operations that are still in the earliest stages due to the prioritization of basic human needs such as food and water. FEMA has already approved over \$1 billion in payments to impacted Floridians and registrations for Individual Assistance continue to grow and are now over 900,000.

Throughout this event, the State of Florida has been faced with many challenges but has moved with remarkable speed to adopt innovative approaches to the response and recovery of this catastrophic event. Despite these best efforts, operational delays occur due to factors outside of our control and because of the complexity of this unique response. Therefore, the State of Florida requests an additional 30-day extension of the 100% federal cost share for Categories A and B and a favorable decision on the pending request.

Sincerely,



Kevin Guthrie
State Coordinating Officer