

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

October 24, 2017

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20502

Dear Mr. President:

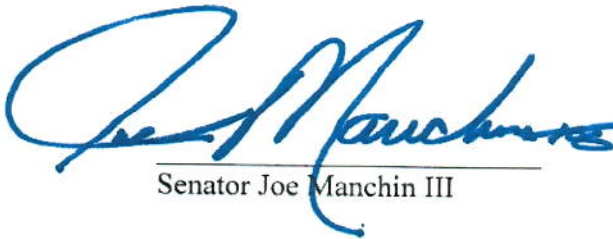
We are proud of the hardworking men and women of West Virginia who have pulled together to help each other rebuild from the torrential rains that inundated the north central region our state earlier this year and led to a major disaster declaration on August 18, 2017 (DR-4331). While we are humbled by the heroic actions of our first responders and the thousands of individual citizens that helped friends, neighbors, and complete strangers escape rising floodwaters, we now find ourselves unable to help many of these same individuals on their own road to recovery, and we urge you to include West Virginia in any Presidential supplemental appropriations request that your Administration may submit to Congress.

As you know, many West Virginia communities have been largely left out of the economic recovery that has helped many other places regain jobs and grow their economy. A recent report by the Economic Innovation Group found that West Virginia had the lowest percentage of its population (3.1%) living in prosperous zip codes and the third highest percentage of its population (34.4%) living in distressed zip codes. Unfortunately, with over 80% of our FEMA applications coming from low income households and only 20 applications approved for Small Business Administration (SBA) disaster loans, it is clear that many of the communities that experienced the worst flooding were the very same places that were already struggling to recover from the recession. With just 5% of residences covered by flood insurance at the time of the event, it is clear that – without additional assistance – many of these communities simply cannot afford to rebuild.

We strongly support West Virginia Governor Jim Justice's request for disaster funding for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG-DR) program to address the critical unmet needs of our constituents. The additional CDBG-DR funding requested by the Governor would help homeowners rebuild safer and stronger. It would give our small businesses an opportunity to reinvest in the communities on which they depend. It would give these communities the resources they need to reduce their exposure to flood threats and promote sustainable development.

As we continue the hard work of rebuilding portions of southern and central West Virginia from the devastating floods that killed 23 people last year, we know all too well that the recovery from the August 18 disaster will be a long and arduous journey back to normal for many of our people. We also know that there are some things that were lost in this disaster that no amount of money can ever bring back, but we are committed to doing everything we can to help our state endure these challenges and give our people a fighting chance. We appreciate what you have done to help begin the recovery process and look forward to continuing that work together until the job is done.

Sincerely,



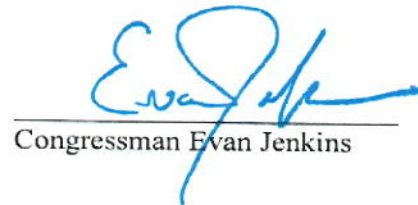
Senator Joe Manchin III



Senator Shelley Moore Capito



Congressman David McKinley



Congressman Evan Jenkins



Congressman Alex Mooney