

Congress of the United States  
Washington, DC 20515

January 11, 2023

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

The Honorable Shailen Bhatt  
Administrator  
Federal Highway Administration  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Mr. Secretary and Administrator Bhatt:

We write to request that the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) provide and expedite support, funding, and other assistance to the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in response to the ongoing winter storms that have severely damaged road and highway infrastructure across the state. California Governor Gavin Newsom's emergency declaration permits FHWA to assist in emergency management efforts, and we respectfully ask that you expedite this essential federal assistance.

These recent weather events, which include atmospheric rivers and a bomb cyclone system, have caused significant flooding, mudslides, erosion, sinkholes, and power outages. The storms have also required evacuations for thousands of Californians and led to road closures that have interrupted daily and essential travel. In some areas, people have lost their lives due to these storms. Due to the consecutive nature of these storms, California is experiencing heavily saturated soil, resulting in an increased vulnerability to flooding. With this extreme rainfall, communities have experienced widespread flooding especially along the coast, and at some watersheds. This series of weather events has already caused extensive damage to California state highways, and we expect additional reports of infrastructure damage in the coming weeks.

On January 4, 2023, Governor Newsom proclaimed a state of emergency throughout California to support the ongoing response to recent winter storms. That response includes Caltrans' request for immediate assistance through the FHWA Emergency Relief Program to support highway repairs and local response and recovery efforts, which Congress authorized in Title 23, United States Code, Section 125. The Emergency Relief Program allows for funds to be dispersed from the Highway Trust Fund for the repair or reconstruction of Federal-aid highways and roads on Federal lands which have suffered serious damage as a result of natural disasters.

The intensity of these storms requires additional assistance, coordination, and federal support. Therefore, we urge you to expedite FHWA support, funding, and other resources in response to these ongoing winter storms. We encourage full cooperation across agencies and municipalities to ensure that Californians can continue to withstand and recover from this storm.

Thank you for your attention to the winter storms thus far, and we look forward to continuing to coordinate emergency and disaster response efforts with the Department of Transportation and FHWA.

Sincerely,



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Jimmy Panetta  
Member of Congress



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Alex Padilla  
United States Senator



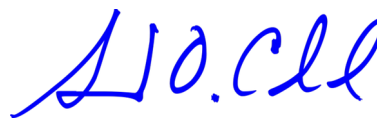
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Dianne Feinstein  
United States Senator



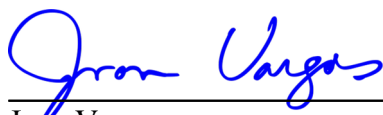
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Jared Huffman  
Member of Congress



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Salud Carbajal  
Member of Congress



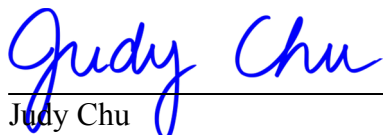
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Juan Vargas  
Member of Congress



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John Garamendi  
Member of Congress



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Judy Chu  
Member of Congress



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Nanette Diaz Barragán  
Member of Congress



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Julia Brownley  
Member of Congress



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Barbara Lee  
Member of Congress



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Eric Swalwell  
Member of Congress



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Ami Bera, M.D.  
Member of Congress



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Ted W. Lieu  
Member of Congress



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Sydney Kamlager-Dove  
Member of Congress



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Robert Garcia  
Member of Congress



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Mark DeSaulnier  
Member of Congress



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Adam B. Schiff  
Member of Congress



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Kevin Mullin  
Member of Congress



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J. Luis Correa  
Member of Congress



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Ro Khanna  
Member of Congress



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Zoe Lofgren  
Member of Congress



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Jim Costa  
Member of Congress



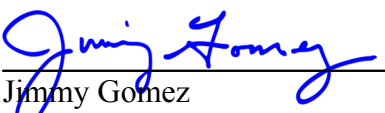
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Anna G. Eshoo  
Member of Congress



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Doris Matsui  
Member of Congress



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Jimmy Gomez  
Member of Congress



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Grace F. Napolitano  
Member of Congress



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Pete Aguilar  
Member of Congress



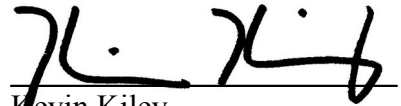
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Tom McClintock  
Member of Congress



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Brad Sherman  
Member of Congress



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Kevin Kiley  
Member of Congress



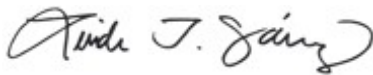
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Tony Cárdenas  
Member of Congress



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Norma J. Torres  
Member of Congress



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Linda T. Sánchez  
Member of Congress



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Mike Thompson  
Member of Congress



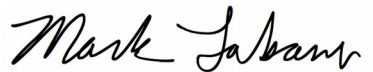
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Mike Levin  
Member of Congress



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Raul Ruiz, M.D.  
Member of Congress



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MARK TAKANO  
Member of Congress