

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0908

January 25, 2022

President Joe Biden
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We write in support of Florida Governor Ron DeSantis's request for a major disaster declaration due to a severe weather system in Charlotte and Lee Counties that included two tornadoes of EF-1 and EF-2 strengths.

The catastrophic power of these tornadoes, as well as the storm's lightning, heavy rain, and strong winds, left thousands without power and displaced at least 300 individuals from their homes. The hundreds of homes damaged or destroyed, many of them decades old and constructed before the implementation of modern mitigation measures, also included five manufactured housing communities between Charlotte and Lee Counties, most of whose residents are elderly and relying on fixed incomes. Joint preliminary damage assessments on January 19 indicated that 86 primary residences were destroyed across the two counties, while 72 faced major damage, 68 minor damage, and 43 were otherwise affected. In the wake of these assessments, Governor DeSantis declared a State of Emergency to release additional state resources and personnel to respond to the disaster. However, because of the extraordinary scope of debris still present and the extent of outstanding clean up and recovery efforts, more assistance is still needed.

Ensuring that the state has access to the federal resources it needs is imperative to protect Floridians, their property, and their communities. As such, we urge you to approve the State of Florida's request for a major disaster declaration and Individual Assistance, subject to all applicable laws and regulations, which will provide the assistance necessary to ensure the safety of our state.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Marco Rubio
U.S. Senator



Rick Scott
U.S. Senator