

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 2, 2017

The Honorable William Long
Administrator
Federal Emergency Management Agency
500 C Street SW
Washington, D.C. 20472

Dear Administrator Long:

Hurricane Irma, a category 4 storm, made landfall in Florida three weeks ago. In the storm's aftermath, Florida counties continue to struggle with removing debris on private roads, which threatens the health and safety of residents. We urge the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to work with requesting counties in Florida to swiftly approve federal reimbursements for debris removal on private roads where safety hazards have been identified.

We have seen firsthand the devastation caused by the hurricane and thank you for your partnership and prompt approvals for Public Assistance as counties continue to assist residents recover from this major hurricane. Debris, including trash and fallen trees, still litter roads and properties across Florida after Hurricane Irma. The longer we wait for debris removal, the more these piles of debris continue to produce unsafe and unsanitary conditions for Floridians across the state. Recognizing the magnitude of this storm, the removal of debris on private roads should be treated the same as debris on other roads when in the interest of public safety.

As FEMA is the lead federal agency responsible for disaster response, the law provides it with the authority to assist with debris removal on private property after a natural disaster. As such, we respectfully request you work with the state and counties to approve adequate removal of debris from private roads so that residents can continue to recover safely and efficiently.

Sincerely,



Marco Rubio
U.S. Senator



Bill Nelson
U.S. Senator