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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3201

September 12, 2024

The Honorable Kathy Hochul
Governor, New York State
New York State Capitol Building
Albany, New York 12224

Dear Governor Hochul,

I write today to express my deep concern and frustration over what I view as the lack of urgency in your response to the catastrophic flooding and heavy rainfall that devastated Suffolk County on August 18th. It has been nearly a month since this disaster struck, yet the recovery process has been unacceptably slow, leaving my constituents to fend for themselves amid dangerous conditions. I believe it is imperative you request additional FEMA disaster assistance immediately.

Since the storm, we have seen homes condemned, a mudslide that threatens further destruction, and a major road collapse, further isolating communities and cutting off vital access. These conditions are not just inconveniences; they are life-threatening realities that demand immediate and decisive action. Yet, the state's response has been lethargic, and I believe the continued inaction is simply unacceptable.

Let me be clear: the residents of Suffolk County cannot wait any longer. I am fully prepared to be a partner in urging federal assistance from FEMA, but I cannot do so without our Governor requesting disaster assistance directly from FEMA. I believe your delay in requesting this assistance is directly impeding the ability to bring much-needed federal resources to bear in addressing the extensive damage and providing relief to those in desperate need.

The clock is ticking. Every day that passes without action from your office is another day that our communities remain in crisis. The failure to promptly request FEMA assistance is a failure of leadership and a dereliction of duty to the people of New York. I hope you will consider taking immediate action and requesting federal assistance so we may begin the process of rebuilding our communities and restoring some sense of normalcy for those who have been devastated by this storm.

I believe this situation requires more than just words—it demands immediate action. I stand ready to work with you and any necessary entities to ensure a swift recovery for Suffolk County, but I believe you must act now.

I look forward to your prompt response to this urgent matter.

Sincerely,

Nick LaLota
Member of Congress