



**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
Washington, DC 20515

May 23, 2025

The Honorable Kristi Noem  
Secretary  
Department of Homeland Security  
2707 Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue SE  
Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear Secretary Noem,

We are writing in concern for several members of our community who are awaiting funds from pending Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) claims.

In May 2020, mid-Michigan was devastated by historic flooding caused by the collapse of multiple dams after two days of heavy rainfall.<sup>1</sup> This disaster resulted in the evacuation of more than 10,000 residents and nearly \$200 million in damages.<sup>2</sup> The flooding destroyed critical infrastructure and wiped out family homes and small businesses that served as pillars of our community. These events led to Governor Whitmer requesting a federal emergency declaration to assist Midland County's flood response,<sup>3</sup> which President Trump approved in July 2020.<sup>4</sup> Regrettably, over five years later, our residents are still waiting for FEMA to complete its reimbursement process. For example, Midland County has not received full repayment for 4 of its 8 obligated assistance programs, totaling nearly \$500,000 in outstanding funds. The village of Sanford, Michigan, which has an annual general budget of just over \$200,000, is still working with FEMA to obtain \$600,000 of their requested funds. Furthermore, multiple local businesses and recreational sites are still awaiting millions of dollars in funding owed, including the Midland Center for the Arts. These funds are not luxuries; they are lifelines for rebuilding, restoring local economies, and protecting communities from future harm.

FEMA's reimbursements are vital to our local governments and economies. We share the concern that FEMA's cumbersome processes have created barriers for communities seeking relief and need reform. We also share in the mission to streamline and improve the efficiency of the disaster assistance process to ensure other communities around the nation are not subject to the years-long delays that our region has experienced.

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<sup>1</sup> Federal Emergency Management Agency: [Michigan Dam Incident Response Review](#)

<sup>2</sup> The Mackinac Center for Public Policy: [The 2020 Midland County Dam Failure](#)

<sup>3</sup> Press Release: [Governor Whitmer Requests Federal Emergency Declaration to Aid in Midland County Flood Response](#)

<sup>4</sup> Press Release: [President Donald J. Trump Approves Major Disaster Declaration for Michigan](#)

That said, our community continues to be burdened by these systemic FEMA challenges, and while we remain grateful for the assistance from the dedicated FEMA personnel thus far, we are requesting FEMA work with our community to ensure the outstanding disaster-related claim requests for the following projects arising from FEMA-4547-DR-MI promptly be reviewed and resolved:

- 1) Midland County
- 2) Village of Sanford
- 3) Midland Center for the Arts

Our constituents and Americans nationwide deserve transparency and assurance that the federal government remains committed to aiding disaster recovery and preparedness. Thank you for your timely attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kristen McDonald Rivet". The script is cursive and fluid.

Kristen McDonald Rivet  
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "John Moolenaar". The script is cursive and fluid.

John Moolenaar  
Member of Congress