

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 1, 2024

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Chair
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Susan Collins
Vice Chair
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Colleagues,

The devastation from Hurricane Helene across the southeastern United States is simply inconceivable. As we write this letter there are **160 confirmed deaths and counting** – 73 in North Carolina, 36 in South Carolina, 25 in Georgia, 15 in Florida, 9 in Tennessee, and 2 in Virginia.¹ Because of a lack of cell service, we anticipate even greater tragedy to unfold in the days and weeks ahead as communications and power are restored and we can understand the full scope of this disaster.

Even preliminary damage assessments indicate that, at a minimum, the total damage and economic loss will be in the tens of billions of dollars.^{2 3} This amount will likely soar as recovery efforts continue and the full picture of this ruinous disaster becomes clear.

Although the true level of devastation is still unfolding, it is clear that Congress must act to meet the unmet needs in our states and address the scope and scale of destruction experienced by our constituents. This may even require Congress to come back in October to ensure we have enough time to enact legislation before the end of this calendar year.


Tens of millions of Americans were impacted by Hurricane Helene, and we look forward to working with you to provide relief to those impacted by this horrific storm.

¹ Wolfe, E. (2024, October 1). Live updates: Desperation grows to find hundreds unaccounted for in wake of helene. CNN. <https://www.cnn.com/weather/live-news/hurricane-helene-damage-north-carolina-10-01-24/index.html>

² Danielle, M. (2024, September 30). Helene aftermath: Nearly 100 dead, historic flooding, millions without power amid catastrophic destruction. <https://www.accuweather.com/en/hurricane/helene-aftermath-nearly-100-dead-historic-flooding-millions-without-power-amid-catastrophic-destruction/1697545>

³ Revell, Eric. "Hurricane Helene Devastation Could Cost up to \$34b, Moody's Says." Fox Business, Fox Business, 30 Sept. 2024, www.foxbusiness.com/economy/hurricane-helene-devastation-could-cost-up-34b-moodys-says.

Sincerely,



Thom Tillis
United States Senator




Ted Budd
United States Senator




Lindsey O. Graham
United States Senator



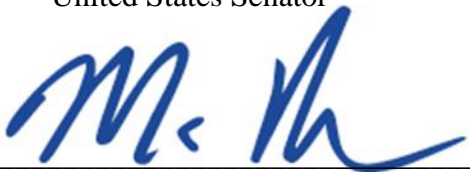
Tim Scott
United States Senator



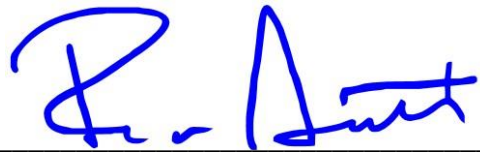
Raphael Warnock
United States Senator



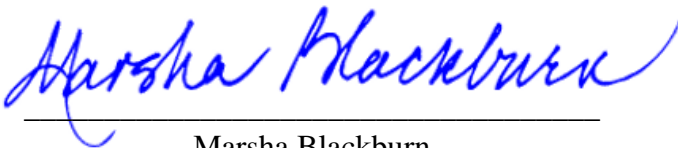
Jon Ossoff
United States Senator



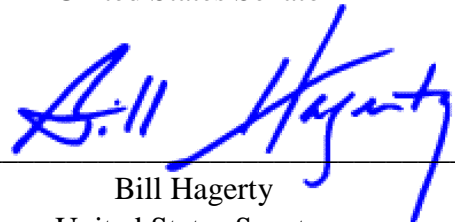
Marco Rubio
United States Senator



Rick Scott
United States Senator



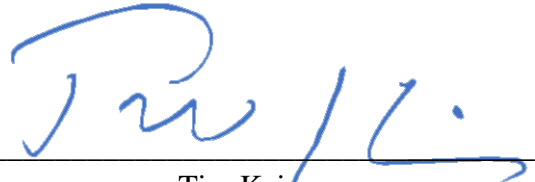
Marsha Blackburn
United States Senator



Bill Hagerty
United States Senator



Mark Warner
United States Senator



Tim Kaine
United States Senator