

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

April 18, 2023

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden  
President of the United States  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Biden:

In anticipation of expected flooding from snowmelt derived from recent winter storms, we write in support of a Major Disaster Declaration for the State of Nevada. Between March 8th and March 31st, 2023, Nevada experienced a series of severe winter storms that resulted in devastating damage across the northern and eastern parts of the state. Widespread flooding, rockslides, and landslides have threatened communities, and state officials are expecting the impacts of this storm to continue to be felt as temperatures warm and the snowpack begins to melt. The state has already assessed more than \$10 million in damages to public infrastructure alone, and that dollar amount will only increase without significant federal support. We therefore respectfully request that you swiftly declare a major disaster so our state has access to the federal resources it needs to address these conditions and protect our residents, their property, local businesses, tribal communities, and Nevada's counties, cities, and related infrastructure.

Prior to the winter storm incident that hit Nevada in March, at the end of February, Nevada snowpacks in the Eastern Sierra watersheds were already at 212 percent of median and 179 percent of median peak levels. Even prior to February, we witnessed extreme storms across the west, and as a result of consistent, freezing temperatures, we have seen these record snowpacks continue to grow.

As detailed in the letter sent to you by Nevada Governor Lombardo on April 13, 2023, requesting a Major Disaster Declaration, three counties are being disproportionately impacted by the storms and the subsequent flooding: Eureka County, Lincoln County, and Churchill County. In Eureka County, officials estimated that water was rushing to flood the community at a rate of over 600,000 gallons per minute during the March storm; and, in Churchill County, the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) has indicated that 1.1 million acre feet of water could flood the community as the snowpack melts. Nevada's farmers and ranchers are also feeling the effects of the severe winter season, which has increased livestock mortality and disrupted and restricted transportation across the state.

Nevada state officials have done an excellent job in administering a hazard mitigation plan and working around the clock to protect Nevada families. However, actions already being undertaken by the state and our federal partners underscore the urgency and need for additional steps.

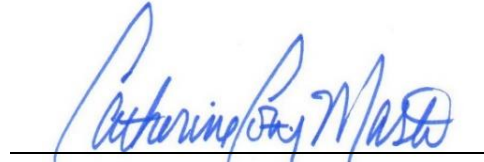
We appreciate your attention to this matter and urge you to expeditiously grant Nevada's request for a Major Disaster Declaration so that our state can continue to implement measures that will

fortify our infrastructure and prepare Nevada communities to withstand the continued devastating effects of this winter storm series.

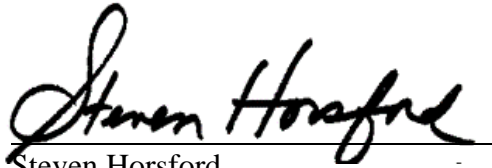
Sincerely,



Jacky Rosen  
United States Senator



Catherine Cortez Masto  
United States Senator



Steven Horsford  
Member of Congress