

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

November 19, 2018

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Majority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
317 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer  
Democratic Leader  
U.S. Senate  
322 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Richard Shelby  
Chairman  
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations  
Room S-128, The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Patrick Leahy  
Vice Chairman  
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations  
Room S-128, The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Leader McConnell, Leader Schumer, Chairman Shelby and Vice Chairman Leahy:

As you consider providing emergency disaster aid in response to the devastating impacts of Hurricane Michael and the California wildfires, we ask that you include support for the thousands of families and businesses impacted by the September gas explosions in Andover, North Andover, and Lawrence, Massachusetts.

On September 13, a surge in gas pressure resulted in explosions and long-term damage to the natural gas distribution system in Andover, North Andover, and Lawrence, Massachusetts. Because of this disaster, thousands of residents have no gas service and are likely to remain without service through mid- to late November. Overnight temperatures have already dipped below freezing in the region, and this week a winter storm warning has been issued.

On November 9, Governor Baker requested that the President issue an Emergency Declaration under the Stafford Act for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency, in collaboration with Federal Emergency Management Agency, found that the events of September 13-16 are of such severity that effective response is beyond the capabilities of the State and affected local governments. Supplementary federal assistance is needed to save lives, protect public health and safety, and support additional emergency protective measures.

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In any legislation that the Committee may consider, we ask that you specifically include funding to support the residents of the Merrimack Valley that are struggling to recover from this long-term disruption to their lives and their businesses.

Thank you very much for considering our request. We look forward to working with you to provide disaster relief funding to the residents of Massachusetts impacted by this tragedy.

Sincerely,



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Edward J. Markey  
United States Senator



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Elizabeth Warren  
United States Senator