

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 30, 2026

Jarrett Devine
Acting Regional Administrator
Federal Emergency Management Agency Region 1
220 Binney Street
Cambridge, MA 02142

Dear Acting Regional Administrator Devine,

We write to urge you to rescind the decision to freeze federal assistance for dozens of active disaster recovery projects in Massachusetts. If this cancellation were to proceed as planned, it would jeopardize the safety and resiliency of communities along the Massachusetts coastline and place an incredible financial burden on impacted residents. As such, we urge you to rescind this unexpected and unnecessary decision.

On July 13, 2026, the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) received a letter from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)'s Region 1 outlining the cancellation of projects related to four previously declared major disasters associated with Hurricane Sandy and Winter Storms Nemo, Juno, and Riley: 4097DR-MA, 4110DR-MA, 4214DR-MA, and 4372DR-MA. These storms had devastating impacts on Massachusetts, particularly along the Commonwealth's coastline. Seven coastal communities—Marshfield, Scituate, Hull, Quincy, Nahant, Gloucester, and Rockport—continue to complete repairs under FEMA's Public Assistance program. For years, FEMA has been working dutifully with these communities to ensure that their projects are properly managed and within the scope of the Public Assistance Program. It comes as a surprise that FEMA has now decided to reverse course and cease working with these communities on the charge with which it is entrusted: equipping states and local communities with resources and other support to recover from disasters that exceed their ability to respond.

It is also surprising to hear about these cancellations given that we understand that no other state has received a similar determination. This letter from FEMA Region 1 specifically targets Massachusetts, a particularly troubling fact given that the Trump administration is reportedly politicizing major disaster declarations. President Trump has approved only 23 percent of disaster requests from blue states, compared to 89 percent of requests from red states. Additionally, blue states have had to wait twice as long as red states to receive a decision from the Administration on disaster requests.¹ Against that backdrop, the Administration is now singling out Massachusetts with this reckless cancellation.

¹ Thomas Frank, *It's 3 times harder for blue states to get disaster funding under Trump*, Politico (Mar. 23, 2026), <https://www.politico.com/news/2026/03/23/trump-denies-disaster-aid-for-democratic-led-states-00831199>.

This determination is also arbitrary: there are many projects listed on OpenFEMA associated with disasters older than Hurricane Sandy, the oldest disaster you specify in your letter.² The age of these projects, then, cannot be an adequate rationale for this decision, especially since the affected communities have been making progress toward recovery and future disaster resiliency. The duration of some projects has also been extended due to repeated damage by subsequent storms.

The impacts to affected Massachusetts communities would be profound were these cancellations to remain in place. These four storms were responsible for over \$100 million in damage to Massachusetts communities as identified by FEMA and MEMA. Local communities have already invested heavily in recovery efforts and stand to lose already-spent funding and future funding obligated through Public Assistance to invest in the long-term resiliency of the Massachusetts coast. Projects placed in jeopardy include repairs to seawalls, revetments, outfalls, and more. These harmful consequences will financially burden communities and result in the potential termination of these projects, putting residents and our coasts at unnecessary risk.

As such, we request that you rescind the cancellation of these disaster recovery projects and restore Public Assistance eligibility for these Massachusetts communities. Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.

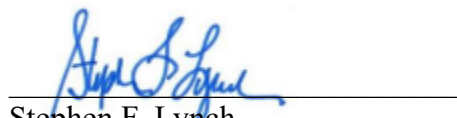
Sincerely,



Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



Stephen F. Lynch
Member of Congress



William R. Keating
Member of Congress

² "OpenFEMA." FEMA.gov. Accessed July 29, 2026. <https://www.fema.gov/about/reports-and-data/openfema>.