

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 10, 2026

The Honorable Donald Trump
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Trump,

We write to respectfully urge your swift consideration and authorization of the Major Disaster Declaration request from Governor Hochul on behalf of the State of New York in the wake of the February blizzard that brought record snowfall, strong wind that caused whiteout conditions, and minor coastal flooding to southern New York. We support the Governor's request for Public Assistance (PA) for Queens, Nassau, and Suffolk County, and Snow Assistance for Bronx, Kings, Nassau, New York, Queens, Richmond, Suffolk, and Westchester Counties, and Hazard Mitigation for the entire State. We also support the inclusion of any additional counties that New York State believes meet the threshold for PA and Snow Assistance. Such a declaration under the *Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act* (P.L. 100-707) would unlock crucial Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) resources and assets that will aid the State, first responders, and community efforts to recover and rebuild in the coming months and years.

The winter storm rapidly intensified past initial predictions, impacting the State on starting on February 22nd and continuing through the evening of February 23rd. According to the National Weather Service, the affected counties received record one-day and two-day snowfall, ranging from 20 to 30 inches. The National Weather Service is also able to preliminarily confirm that blizzard criteria were met as wind speeds easily reached 60 miles per hour in several locations, and over 80 miles per hour on eastern Long Island.

The blizzard created whiteout conditions, coastal flooding, travel disruptions, and power outages for over 40,000 households. More than 175 school districts on Long Island and in the Hudson Valley were closed on February 23rd. Airports cancelled flights during the blizzard and Long Island Rail Road suspended service the evening of the 22nd into the morning of the 23rd while local travel bans were in effect across eight counties and New York City. Tragically, the blizzard took the lives of five people.

In preparation for the blizzard, Governor Hochul declared a State of Emergency for 22 counties on February 21st. Local and State officials deployed equipment and personnel in preparation for dangerous weather conditions. This mobilization of resources to assist with snow removal and plowing were critical emergency measures to protect the public and save lives. Due to the severity of this blizzard, which compounded on the effects of Winter Storm Fern a few weeks before, New York and its municipalities are not able to fully rebuild and recover without federal resources.

We are grateful for the prompt attention that the federal government has historically given in ensuring public safety and responding to disasters that have impacted New York State. In that spirit, we strongly urge you to approve New York's Major Disaster Declaration.

Sincerely,



Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator



Charles E. Schumer
United States Senator