

Congress of the United States
Washington, D.C. 20510

February 2, 2022

President Joseph R. Biden, Jr
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President,

We write in strong support the State of Colorado's (the State) request for a 100 percent cost share from the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) for Private Property Debris Removal (PPDR) for the Marshall Fire disaster (DR-4634, Colorado Wildfires and Straight-line Winds). The State has also requested that FEMA approve the PPDR program and funds for the removal of home foundations.

As you know, your Administration, FEMA and other federal agency partners have provided essential assistance to help Colorado communities respond to and recover from this disaster. The Marshall Fire was the most destructive event in Colorado's history, with over \$680 million in damage. The fire destroyed 1,084 homes and damaged dozens of businesses and public facilities. Two people are dead or presumed dead because of the fire.

Additional federal assistance is vital to jump-start the communities' economic recovery. As small communities, with large percentages of their residential housing stock destroyed, an increase in the federal cost share for the PPDR program from 75% to 100% is critical.

As Colorado transitions to long-term recovery, debris removal is the most urgent priority for rebuilding. The State, Boulder County, the City of Louisville, and the Town of Superior are collaborating on a debris-removal effort in order to minimize individual costs to survivors and provide for expeditious debris removal that conforms to public health and safety standards.

State and local officials have determined that the debris from the destroyed homes is an immediate threat to public health and safety and to the economic recovery of the community at large. The State requested that FEMA approve PPDR to assist with debris-removal efforts, including additional assistance to remove fire-damaged concrete foundations. Unlike in other disasters such as tornados, where foundations may be reused, the intense heat of the conflagration rendered the foundations unusable for rebuilding. This approval is vital to begin rebuilding as soon as possible for the community's broader economic recovery.

Because of the staggering scale of the destruction from the Marshall Fire and the vast amount of resources required for the community to recover, we believe that these requests are entirely warranted. We urge FEMA's swift consideration and approval of the PPDR with foundation removal request and your support for the subsequent request for additional federal assistance for the program.

Thank you for your consideration and continued support. We continue to stand ready to assist as we work toward full recovery.

Sincerely,



United States Senator
Michael F. Bennet



United States Senator
John Hickenlooper



Member of Congress
Joe Neguse