

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

January 25, 2017

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

Dear President Trump:

As members of the South Dakota congressional delegation, we write to express our full support of Governor Dennis Daugaard's request for a major disaster declaration covering the South Dakota counties of Butte, Clark, Codington, Day, Deuel, Dewey, Edmunds, Fall River, Faulk, Grant, Haakon, Hamlin, Harding, Jackson, Jones, Marshall, McPherson, Meade, Pennington, Perkins, Roberts, Stanley, Sully, and Ziebach Counties, as well as the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe within Dewey and Ziebach Counties and the Oglala Sioux Tribe. This declaration would greatly assist in recovery efforts from strong winter thunderstorms and a subsequent blizzard from December 24, 2016, through December 26, 2016, that resulted in flooding, significant snow and ice accumulations, and high-velocity straight-line winds across the state.

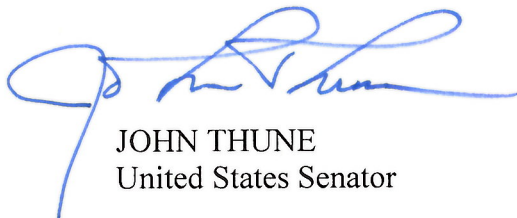
The governor's disaster declaration request explains that the storms caused significant damage to public infrastructure in the affected counties, as well as the tragic loss of three lives. The storms damaged approximately 5,400 miles of rural electric cooperative power lines, as well as transmission lines and radio communications towers. The damages are especially overwhelming for our rural communities, with the per capita impact reaching a devastating \$565.17 in Pennington County. Your approval of the request for a disaster declaration will accelerate recovery across the affected regions.

We applaud the work of federal, state, county, and local entities in response to the historic storm system. Their efforts helped to mitigate the immediate impacts of the storm. However, the impact to public infrastructure across 24 counties and two tribal governments is severe. Many of these areas were still working to recover from the six presidential disaster declarations of the past four years. As the governor indicates, the storm is of "such severity and magnitude that effective response is beyond the capabilities of the state and the affected local governments, and supplemental federal assistance is necessary." This determination was reached on the basis of preliminary damage assessment completed by the state in cooperation with the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

We respectfully request that you declare a major disaster for relevant areas of our state and that you instruct federal agencies to expedite the delivery of all forms of federal disaster assistance for which the state is eligible based upon that declaration. We would be pleased to offer any assistance that you may require in fulfilling this request.

Thank you for your prompt consideration of this important matter. Please do not hesitate to contact any of us if we can provide you with additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "John Thune", with a stylized flourish at the end.

JOHN THUNE
United States Senator

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "M. Michael Rounds", with a stylized flourish at the end.

M. MICHAEL ROUNDS
United States Senator

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Kristi Noem", with a stylized flourish at the end.

KRISTI NOEM
Member of Congress