

Congress of the United States  
Washington, DC 20510

September 13, 2026

The Honorable Donald J. Trump  
President of the United States  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Trump:

We request that you act quickly to grant Hawai‘i access to all available assistance from federal agencies to speed our recovery from a succession of extreme events in less than six months: the Kona Lows (March), the Kona earthquake (May), Hurricane Lala (August), Tropical Storm Moke (August), and Hurricane Lowell (September). The cumulative impact of these events exceeds the capacity of the State and our counties, warranting federal assistance.

Specifically, we write in support of:

- Governor Josh Green’s September 9, 2026, expedited request for a Major Disaster Declaration for the Counties of Kaua‘i and Maui as a result of Hurricane Lowell; and
- The Governor’s September 9, 2026, request for a Major Disaster Declaration for the State of Hawai‘i as a result of Hurricane Lala, followed by Tropical Storm Moke.

Swift approval of these requests would ensure urgently needed aid to Hawai‘i residents who have been impacted by these disasters, including expanded eligibility for food assistance under the Disaster Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (D-SNAP) for individuals who experienced disaster-related losses or the interruption of their income due to Lala.

We are grateful for your disaster declarations for the Kona Lows and the Kona Earthquake and respectfully ask your continued support for the recovery of the people of Hawai‘i.

**Hurricane Lowell**

Hurricane Lowell had extreme impacts on Kaua‘i and Maui Counties’ basic infrastructure, which left communities isolated. At its peak, Lowell brought gusts of 87 miles per hour in Nawiliwili and 84 miles per hour in Līhu‘e. Rainfall reached 17 inches in Kauai‘i’s higher elevations, and storm surge of 2 to 4 feet impacted the south and west coasts of the islands of Kaua‘i and Ni‘ihau. Lowell also brought storm surge and heavy rains throughout the state.

The Kaua‘i Island Utility Cooperative reported that approximately 90 percent—more than 33,000 of its 36,000 member accounts—experienced a power outage during the storm. Thousands of Kauai‘i’s residents still lack electricity to refrigerate their food and medications. At its peak, Lowell forced the closure of all of Kaua‘i’s commercial ports and Līhu‘e airport, which effectively shut down external access to the island. Compounding these impacts, numerous roads were impassable due to fallen trees, other debris, and flooding, which isolated

communities and has made it difficult for the Kauaʻi Island Utility Cooperative to assess and repair damaged electrical transmission and distribution infrastructure.

Lānaʻi's Kaumalapaʻu Harbor, the sole commercial cargo access to the island of Lānaʻi, was also damaged during Lowell and is inoperable. Lānaʻi's three thousand residents depend on Kaumalapaʻu Harbor for food, fuel, medical supplies, and all construction and repair materials.

### **Hurricane Lala**

From August 14 to 16, 2026, Hurricane Lala brought severe impacts across the State of Hawaiʻi. Some areas of the State received between 20 to 40 inches of rain, which caused flooding, runoff, and landslides that had significant impacts to communities, transportation systems, utilities, and public infrastructure across the state.

Communities in Hawaiʻi County's Kaʻū district sustained particularly heavy impacts. These communities are connected to the rest of the county by a single primary highway corridor, known as Highway 11, which suffered major damage from the flash flooding, mudslides, and heavy debris caused by Lala. As a result, community members were physically isolated while they lost access to electric and cellular service, fuel, groceries, and medical care. Severe slope failure at Nāʻālehu Cemetery caused the disinterment of human remains, creating an urgent public health, cultural, and operational challenge.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) validated Joint Preliminary Damage Assessment confirms over \$67 million in damages statewide that would be eligible under Categories A – G of FEMA's Public Assistance (PA) program. Assessments of damage to residences eligible under FEMA's Individual Assistance (IA) program confirm 267 damaged residences statewide across three counties, with Hawaiʻi County accounting for 217 of the damaged residences.

### **Federal Assistance**

To effectively respond and recover from these two hurricanes, we support the Governor's requests for federal assistance. Specifically, we urge you to approve for Hurricane Lowell:

- A Presidential Major Disaster Declaration for the State of Hawaiʻi;
- All applicable categories of FEMA's PA program for Kauaʻi and Maui Counties;
- All applicable categories of FEMA's IA program for Kauaʻi and Maui Counties, including the Other Needs Assistance program;
- FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (statewide); and
- the Small Business Administration's (SBA) Economic Injury Disaster Loan program for Kauaʻi and Maui Counties.

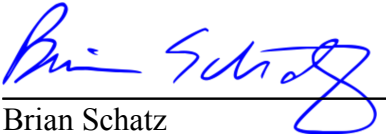
We also urge you to approve the following regarding Hurricane Lala:

- A Presidential Major Disaster Declaration for the State of Hawaiʻi;
- All applicable categories of FEMA's PA program for Hawaiʻi, Honolulu, and Maui Counties;
- All applicable categories of FEMA's IA program for Hawaiʻi, Honolulu, and Maui Counties, including the Other Needs Assistance program;
- FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (statewide); and

- Direct federal assistance as required.

We are grateful for your consideration of these requests and look forward to working with you in the months and years ahead to help Hawai'i recover and rebuild.

Sincerely,



Brian Schatz

United States Senator



Ed Case

Member of Congress



Mazie K. Hirono

United States Senator



Jim Tokuda

Member of Congress