



July 30, 2026

President Donald J Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

REQUEST FOR PRESIDENTIAL MAJOR DISASTER DECLARATION FOR KERR COUNTY

Dear Mr. President:

As the Kerr County Commissioner for Precinct 2, I had the honor of meeting with you and the First Lady last July when you traveled to Kerrville to see the devastation caused by the July 4th 2025 flood and affirm the federal government's support for our recovery. That support, and how quickly it arrived, has been so critical to Kerr County. It is with a heavy heart that I write to ask for the same support and speed for my community in response to the July 2026 floods.

I thank you for granting an Emergency Declaration and authorizing FEMA to provide emergency protective measures, and respectfully request that you grant Governor Abbott's request for a Major Disaster Declaration that includes both Public Assistance (Categories A-G) and Individual Assistance, along with statewide activation of the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, the U.S. Small Business Administration Disaster Loan Program, and disaster-related tax relief through the Internal Revenue Service laid out in the Governor's request as soon as possible.

The damage in Kerr County is overwhelming. Homes and businesses are filled with mud and debris and we have confirmed so far that 384 homes are destroyed or have major damage; more than the number of homes that were destroyed or had major damage after the 2025 floods. Over 1600 individual cases of property damage have been reported in the Texas Division of Emergency Management's Individual State of Texas Assessment Tool (iSTAT). Most of the affected homeowners do not have insurance that will cover the damage. The City of Kerrville alone is estimating over \$30 million dollars in damage to its water treatment plant, sewage lift stations and roads and bridges. Nine of eleven Kerr County bridges sustained damage during this flood. Small businesses have lost the equipment they need to function. This level of

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damage would be catastrophic for any community, but many of the communities affected by this flood, including Kerr County, are still struggling to recover from last year's catastrophic flooding. Families, businesses, and local governments are facing a more destructive disaster with far less help than last year.

Kerr County does not have the resources to respond and recover from a second major disaster just one year after the last. The damage from this flood is far greater than that of 2025. In my precinct (from east Kerrville to beyond Center Point), it is fair to say that nearly all of the homes that were flooded in July 2025 were again flooded in July 2026 as the river rose just as high and the duration of the flood was significantly longer. The main difference this year is that due to the extremely heavy rains that hit our area for three days, there was significant localized flooding not associated with the Guadalupe River or its tributaries. Damage to our roads and bridges is far worse and more widespread this year. Numerous private roads far from the river have been heavily damaged by water flowing down hillsides due to the extensive heavy rains over multiple days.

Having just been through a major flood event, we were far better prepared this time and had better monitoring and warning systems in place with first responders staged and in the field. Numerous rescues were made. Residents and visitors were successfully evacuated to higher ground. Unlike the 119 lives lost in Kerr County in 2025; this time, only one life was lost to the flood and the individual was quickly recovered. As a result, national and regional media coverage has been minimal as has been the case for financial support from NGOs, churches and private donors. Perhaps the lack of funds seen may also be attributed to the wide spread area of impact in neighboring counties, although it is my belief that Kerr County has been hit much harder once again.

It has been truly heartbreaking to meet with homeowners who had just gotten back into their homes, only to face the overwhelming impact of another flood that was every bit as bad if not worse than the last one. Our small business owners have also once again been severely impacted. Numerous small businesses did not survive the 2025 flood and I fear that it will be worse this year.

You may not recall meeting me in 2025 as you met so many people when you visited Kerrville. I had the pleasure of meeting you and the First Lady down at the river when you were meeting and thanking first responders. I was there as I am also a member of the Center Point Volunteer Fire Department. When we met, I told you that this is "Trump Country" and I thanked you for coming so quickly to see the damage for yourself. Fox News captured that moment and I will always cherish that video clip which serves to remind me of what true leadership looks like.

Our County has declared the July 2026 floods to be a local state of disaster pursuant to the Texas Government Code and our Commissioners' Court has renewed the declaration. Governor Abbott has also declared there to be a state of disaster for Kerr County and other affected counties and has sent you a formal request for a Major Disaster Declaration that includes both Public Assistance (Categories A-G) and Individual Assistance, along with statewide activation of the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, the U.S. Small Business Administration Disaster Loan Program, and disaster-related tax relief through the Internal Revenue Service.

Mr. President, Kerr County once again needs your help to recover and rebuild. Please grant Governor Abbott's request for a **Major Disaster Declaration**.

Thank you for your continued support for Kerr County and the State of Texas.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Rich Paces', is positioned above the printed name.

Rich Paces
Kerr County Commissioner, Precinct 2

CC: Senator John Cornyn
Senator Ted Cruz
Representative Chip Roy
Governor Greg Abbott