

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

November 30, 2020

To American Governors:

Over the last year, our Nation has faced a series of daunting challenges, including the COVID-19 pandemic, wildfires that caused unprecedented damage, a historic number of tropical storms and hurricanes, a derecho, and other severe weather events. Through all these challenges and their impacts, our Nation remains strong. We will not just recover, we will adapt and become stronger and even more resilient than we were before.

Our Nation's resilience is a shared responsibility. We must continue to collaborate across all levels of government, the private sector, critical infrastructure operators, academia, and our citizenry to enhance America's resilience. By working together, we will ensure our Nation prospers no matter what challenges come our way.

Americans face an ever-increasing number and variety of potential threats and hazards. Individually, these threats can have a negative effect on states and local communities, both in terms of physical damage and human suffering. Addressing them requires thoughtful planning. As threats overlap, the cumulative effects can increase the complexity and importance of effective planning and mitigation. Through September of 2020, the United States has sustained 16 extreme, weather-related events that each exceeded \$1 billion in losses individually, caused 188 deaths cumulatively, and cost at least \$46.6 billion. Over the last 5 years, these types of disasters have cost an average of \$110 billion per year.

Our Nation is at a crossroads. To remain resilient, we must anticipate and mitigate these threats and their effects by taking steps to reduce our risks over the near and long term, while effectively preparing for, responding to, and recovering from the consequences we cannot avoid.

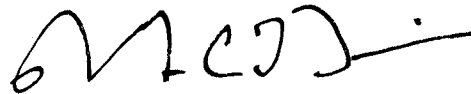
To reduce the negative effects of future disasters, this Administration has made more than \$25 billion available to state, local, tribal, and territorial governments to plan and implement projects. This includes new Community Development Block Grant Mitigation funding and the new Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities program. This new funding allows

states to make unprecedented investments to protect families and communities from future disasters. These investments show that we play a role in fostering a culture of resilience within our society, across our broad array of social, economic, infrastructure, public health, housing, and environmental programs, many of which work together every day to enhance our Nation's well-being and prosperity.

In the coming months, this Administration will be developing a National Resilience Strategy in partnership with state, local, territorial, and tribal governments. This strategy will reflect and build on your successful efforts and identify ways we can strengthen and improve the effectiveness of government programs at each level. To inform our future efforts, please share information with your Federal Emergency Management Agency Regional Administrator on best practices you've developed to improve the resilience of your state.

November is Critical Infrastructure Security and Resilience Month. During this month, we commit to protecting and ensuring the security and resilience of our critical infrastructure networks, our environment, and essential workers who are foundational to our society and American way of life. I would like to thank all of you for your steadfast support and leadership in building a culture of resilience and preparedness in our Nation, and for your continued partnership as this Administration advances strategies that strengthen our resilience today and for future generations of Americans who will follow us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. O'Brien", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Robert C. O'Brien
Assistant to the President for
National Security Affairs