



September 8, 2023

The Honorable Senator Rick Scott
United State Senate
111 N. Adams Street, Suite 208
Tallahassee, FL 32301

Dear Senator Scott,

On behalf of the Florida Association of Counties representing Florida's elected county commissioners], I am writing in support of the Federal Disaster Responsibility Act, which you and Senator Rubio have introduced in the U.S. Senate. We understand that Congresswoman Kat Cammack recently introduced the companion measure (H.R. 5343) in the U.S. House of Representatives.

As Florida continues recovering from the impacts of Hurricanes Ian and Nicole, Hurricane Idalia caused widespread destruction along Florida's Gulf Coast, damaging homes, businesses, and overwhelming basic infrastructure facilities. Initial damage estimates from Moody's Corporation place disaster losses between \$12 billion and \$20 billion. While President Biden signed a major disaster declaration on August 31, 2023, the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) disaster relief fund is running out of money in a year that's setting records for billion-dollar weather disasters.

The substance and timing of the proposed legislation is critical to Florida. It ensures storm victims receive disaster relief. Additionally, the \$16.5 billion included in the bill, which exceeds the Biden Administration's request by \$500 million, guarantees resources will be available for continued hurricane response, recovery, and rebuilding activities in our affected local communities. Moreover, in light of the agriculture losses from Hurricane Ian – estimated at \$1.03 billion by the University of Florida – this legislation provides needed relief to a critical sector of Florida's economy.

In addition, we appreciate the language in Section 5 that limits the application of mandatory easements for shore protection projects when storm rehabilitation efforts are required. This important modification will ensure coastal communities, not only Florida but around the nation, can restore beaches ravaged by natural disasters with federal participation, move projects forward without delay, and provide needed protection before the next disaster.

We thank you and greatly appreciate yours and Senator Rubio's efforts in bringing this crucial legislation forward. Please count on our Association's support!

Sincerely,

Bill Truex
Association President

BILL TRUEX
PRESIDENT
CHARLOTTE

TERRY BURROUGHS
PRESIDENT-ELECT
OKEECHOBEE

MICHELLE LINCOLN
FIRST VICE PRESIDENT
MONROE

RENÉ FLOWERS
SECOND VICE PRESIDENT
PINELLAS

LEE CONSTANTINE
IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT
SEMINOLE

VIRGINIA "GINGER"
DELEGAL
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



