

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

November 22, 2024

President Joseph R. Biden
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

In the wake of the devastation Hurricane Helene inflicted on Western North Carolina, many of our constituents remain unable to return to their homes. Concerningly, temperatures are beginning to drop and we are hearing reports that residents are struggling to receive adequate temporary shelter that is safe for winter and close to their property. We request that you immediately direct the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to deploy FEMA temporary housing resources –including travel trailers and manufactured homes – in Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHA) in Western North Carolina. This would give homeowners the ability to remain on their own property while repairs and reconstruction continue.

FEMA regulations prevent the deployment of temporary housing resources in areas prone to flooding. While this policy is designed to protect the safety of homeowners waiting to be able to return to their homes from the risk of dangerous further flooding, the policy can also prevent residents from being able to stay on their own property, which would make it more difficult for impacted residents to stay close to family and loved ones, attend school, continue working, and help their communities rebuild.

In 2023, FEMA concluded that “the only feasible option to place temporary housing units” was to allow property in Florida SFHAs to participate in FEMA’s direct housing program.¹ Many of the homeowners in Western North Carolina who need temporary housing live in FEMA designated SFHAs. We have heard reports that homeowners who understandably want to remain on their property are being denied resources and have been forced to live out of tents. As temperatures begin to drop, this will no longer be an option.

We appreciate your swift consideration of this request and stand ready to work with you and your administration to get this authorization approved.

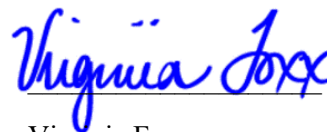
Sincerely,



Ted Budd
United States Senator



Thom Tillis
United States Senator



Virginia Foxx
Member of Congress



Chuck Edwards
Member of Congress

Cc: Deanne Criswell, Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

¹ FEMA. *Placing transportable temporary housing units in special flood hazard areas*. Federal Emergency Management Agency. Retrieved November 21, 2024, from <https://www.fema.gov/fact-sheet/placing-transportable-temporary-housing-units-special-flood-hazard-areas>