



STATE OF INDIANA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
State House, Second Floor
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204

Mike Braun
Governor

August 20, 2026

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

Through: Fredric E. Kaehler
Acting Deputy Administrator
Federal Emergency Management Agency
Region 5
536 South Clark Street, 6th Floor
Chicago, IL 60605

Dear Mr. President:

Under the provisions of Section 401 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 5121-5207 (Stafford Act), and implemented by 44 C.F.R. § 206.36, I respectfully request that you declare a major disaster for the State of Indiana due to the devastation caused by severe weather; extreme straight-line winds, tornadoes, a derecho, flash flooding, and flooding occurring on August 11, 2026, and continuing through the present date. Due to the unusual severity and magnitude of this weather event, this request is being made pursuant to 44 CFR § 206.36(d) and is requested to be expedited.

On August 12, 2026, I took prompt and appropriate action under Indiana law and Section 401 of the Stafford Act by directing the execution of the State Emergency Operation Plan ("SEOP"). However, due to the severity, magnitude, and unprecedented nature of this disaster, I have determined that an effective response is beyond the capabilities of our State and affected local governments, and federal assistance is necessary to supplement the efforts and available resources of the State of Indiana, local governments, disaster relief organizations, and compensation by insurance for disaster-related losses. If provided, I certify that State and local government obligations and expenditures for the current disaster will comply with all applicable cost sharing requirements of the Stafford Act.

This letter and its exhibits are provided to assist in your review of this event and to provide pertinent information about this disaster and its impact on the State of Indiana as well as actions taken by our State and other organizations. Due to the expedited nature of this request, additional information is still being collected to support this request and will be made available upon receipt.

Disaster Summary

On the morning and afternoon of August 11, 2026, a line of very strong and dangerous storms passed through Indiana resulting in at least three (3) confirmed tornadoes, severe thunderstorms, extreme straight-line winds, and flooding which have caused death, injury, and severe damage throughout the state. Response to this disaster is ongoing.

Before these storms made their way through Indiana, the National Weather Services' ("NWS") Storm Prediction Center issued Flood Watches leading up to the event and Flood Warnings for a wide swath of the State, including Flash Flood Emergencies for Henry, Delaware, Madison, Fayette, Franklin, Union, and Wayne counties. Straight-line wind speeds reached up to ninety-nine (99) miles per hour near Gary, Indiana, and gusts reached up to seventy-five (75) miles per hour in LaPorte, Starke, Marshall, and St. Joseph counties. As the system tracked south and east through the late morning and afternoon, additional damage was reported across central Indiana. The severe weather event also included repeated rounds of intense precipitation, which shifted the operational focus to flood response on August 12. Reports of six (6) to nine (9) inches of rain were reported in many affected areas over a 24-hour timespan, and the highest total rainfall reported was at least 11.23 inches. The White River water level also crested at record levels at Anderson and Noblesville, exceeding record levels set in 1913, and the White River was rated at major flood stage in multiple locations by NWS (see Exhibit 1).

In response to this disaster, I issued Executive Order 26-21 (attached as Exhibit 2) on August 13, 2026, which found that a state of emergency existed under Indiana law, and that immediate action was needed to fully and properly respond.

The following is a list of emergency activations and declarations that have been made in response to this disaster:

1. On August 11, 2026, the following counties declared a local disaster emergency: Carroll County, Fayette County, Henry County, Lake County, Porter County, and Tipton County.
2. On August 12, 2026, the SEOP was initiated, and the State Emergency Operations Center ("SEOC") was activated.
3. On August 12, 2026, the following counties declared a local disaster emergency: Delaware County and Wayne County.
4. On August 13, 2026, I issued Executive Order 26-21 declaring a statewide disaster emergency.
5. On August 13, 2026, the following counties declared a local disaster emergency: Madison County and Putnam County.
6. On August 14, 2026, the following counties declared a local disaster emergency: Dearborn County, Hamilton County, Marion County, and LaPorte County.
7. On August 17, 2026, the following counties declared a local disaster emergency: Brown County, Cass County, Marshall County, and Pulaski County.
8. On August 18, 2026, the following counties declared a local disaster emergency: Fountain County, Morgan County, and Starke County.
9. On August 20, 2026, Warren County declared a local disaster Emergency.

To date, twenty-two (22) counties have declared local disaster emergencies (see Exhibit 3).

Impact of Disaster

The impact of this disaster on the State of Indiana and affected local governments is severe and widespread. Although a full accounting has not yet been completed and is still underway, the following information provides a brief overview of some of the devastation that this disaster has wreaked on our state:

- Eight (8) individuals died because of the storms and floods.
- Three (3) individuals have suffered documented injuries.
- At least 44 structures were destroyed.
- At least 959 structures sustained major damage.
- At least 520 structures sustained minor damage.
- At least an additional 217 structures were adversely affected in some manner.

- Power outages peaked at 363,398 customers without power.
- Lake County experienced a 95% power outage, and the towns of Flora and Camden in Carroll County fully lost power. As of today, power is still not fully restored for thousands of residents.
- Countless trees and utility poles were damaged.
- Trailers, vehicles, and vital infrastructure were damaged and destroyed.
- Wastewater treatment plants in certain affected areas were running at decreased capacity, had flood damage, were inaccessible due to high water levels, or completely lost power.
- At least sixty-three (63) schools experienced delays or closings, causing disruption of essential services such as meals, childcare, transportation, and special needs support, resulting in immediate unmet needs for families.
- Emergency communications equipment and infrastructure were damaged and destroyed, requiring generators to provide power.
- Communities without power experienced shortages of oxygen and difficulty recharging oxygen tanks.
- Hundreds of Hoosiers were evacuated in affected areas, including at least two hundred (200) in Delaware County, three hundred (300) in Henry County, and four hundred (400) in Madison County.
- At least sixty-seven (67) major mission requests were undertaken.
- Many local, state, and federal roads were made impassable due to severe flooding and washout. Among others, road closures included the following:
 - SR-235 NB and SB in Jackson County were closed.
 - US-52 EB and WB in Franklin County were closed.
 - SR-32 EB and WB in Delaware County were closed.
 - SR-121 NB and SB in Franklin County were closed.
 - CR-550S at New Columbus Road was closed.
 - 400W, 900W, 200S, and 700S in Randolph County were closed.
 - SR-32 in Randolph County was closed.
 - US-35 in Randolph County was closed.
 - CR-50W between CR-500S and CR-600S was closed in Madison County
 - CR-200S east of CR-400E in Madison County was closed.
 - CR-1300N and 400E in Madison County were closed.
 - CR-200W from SR-28 to 1300N in Madison County was closed.
 - CR-1100N at the intersection with 300E in Madison County was closed.
 - CR-500W and 600N in Madison County were closed.
 - CR-425E between CR-650N and 700N in Madison County was closed.
 - CR-360N between CR-100E and 200E in Madison County was closed.
 - SR-119 NB and SB in Pulaski and White counties were closed.
 - SR-3 NB and SB in Henry County were closed.
 - SR-38 EB and WB in Wayne County were closed.
 - 40S in Randolph County was closed.
 - SR-121 NB and SB in Fayette County were closed.
 - US-40 EB and WB in Wayne County were closed.
 - SR-17 NB and SB in Cass and Fulton counties were closed.
 - I-70 WB was closed at Centerville Road due to washout.
 - Hazel Dell Parkway Bridge collapsed and washed away due to flooding and backflow from the White River, and roads throughout Hamilton County were severely damaged.

Not only was the devastation brought on by this disaster severe and widespread, it also significantly impacted those that are most vulnerable in our State. As shown in Exhibit 4, Exhibit 5, Exhibit 6, and Exhibit 7, Lake County faces significant vulnerabilities, particularly the northern area of the county. Over

14% of Lake County residents are estimated to be in poverty, and the unemployment rate is estimated to be 6.1%, among the highest of any county in Indiana. Lake County was hit by at least two (2) tornadoes, consisting of one (1) EF-1 tornado and one (1) EF-2 tornado. The severe storms and flooding caused 95% of Lake County to lose power, which was the largest power outage event in Northern Indiana Public Service Company's history. Further, Lake County was recently devastated by unprecedented levels of tornadic activity in June of 2026, experiencing five (5) tornadoes, including an EF-2 and EF-3 tornado.

Marion County, another vulnerable area with an estimated 15.3% poverty rate and 5% unemployment rate, was also devastated by the storms and flooding. In just Marion County, officials estimate up to 2,000 structures were possibly damaged or destroyed, and damage and response costs due to the disaster are estimated to exceed tens of millions of dollars. Residents in Rocky Ripple, Ravenswood, and areas of Broad Ripple were evacuated in advance of flood gates closing and the White River cresting at over twenty (20) feet. At least fifty-six (56) rescue operations involving one hundred (100) people and forty-eight (48) pets were conducted in the Ravenswood area alone.

Countless communities were profoundly impacted by this disaster and continue to engage in response and recovery efforts. The required scale of such efforts far exceeds the capacity of local communities. Some affected communities are running low on fuel and other critical supplies. Essential services in many areas have been halted due to the disaster, leaving residents without access to critical resources. Countless Hoosiers in affected areas have lost their homes, vehicles, and other property. Schools, businesses, and churches were damaged and forced to close, and local governments have been stretched to their limits. Due to the expedited nature of this request, the true scale and consequences of this disaster are not yet fully clear. Therefore, complete data still has not been obtained and the figures stated above are expected to increase. Joint state and federal assessments are underway in affected counties.

State, Local, and Volunteer Actions

In response to the disaster, immediate State, local government, and volunteer organization efforts were undertaken. The following information details some of the actions and resources that have been committed so far:

- On August 11, 2026, the SEOP was put into place and the SEOC was activated. Upon activation, SEOC began immediately directing resources in response to this disaster, with the goal of saving lives and preventing property damage.
- Indiana Department of Homeland Security ("IDHS") provided overall direction and control, logistical support, planning, administration, and leadership in the SEOC.
- IDHS opened the State Disaster Relief Fund to award \$5,000 in grants for individual assistance.
- Over the course of the initial response, at least eighteen (18) shelters were opened and served hundreds of people.
- At least one hundred seventy-one (171) Red Cross Responders were assisting with disaster relief efforts.
- In Anderson, Convoy of Hope served at least 8,086 individuals, providing food and other critical relief supplies exceeding 154,000 pounds in weight.
- Numerous search and rescue missions were undertaken by local emergency responders, Indiana State Police ("ISP"), Indiana Department of Natural Resources ("IDNR"), and others.
- Communications equipment was promptly deployed to establish and improve emergency communication by the Office of Emergency Communications ("OEC"), which included, among other things, the deployment of portable generators to communication sites that lost power, backup equipment to damaged sites, radios, and antennas.
- Reunification centers were established.

- IDNR and the Indiana Department of Correction (“IDOC”) deployed personnel and equipment to saw trees and wood, and clear large volumes of storm debris.
- Indiana Department of Transportation (“INDOT”) evaluated road conditions and activated personnel for debris removal and restoration of roads.
- Generators were provided to restore power to emergency communications facilities and to ensure access to oxygen supplies.
- Local, state, and federal roads were promptly cleared of debris or closed until hazards could be addressed.
- Disaster scene security was provided and implemented in certain jurisdictions.
- ISP supported local law enforcement with traffic control and expediting debris removal.
- The ISP Aviation Section was tasked with providing aerial support for Federal Emergency Management Agency (“FEMA”) and IDHS damage assessments in affected areas.
- The Indiana National Guard (“INNG”) was activated and deployed sandbags and barriers to assist with flood mitigation, provided vehicles and equipment to assist with debris removal and highway recovery, and provided fuel and water to assist with recovery efforts.
- Response teams and volunteers in Hamilton County initiated “Operation Beaver Dam” with the support of INNG, utilizing a UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter with heavy-lift sling capabilities to strategically place seventy (70) 2,000-pound sandbags to allow the construction of a secondary dam after the White River threatened to fill a nearby quarry and damage an underground wastewater force main. This operation prevented damage to the wastewater force main, the failure of which could exceed \$1 billion in damage and cause significant sewage discharge.
- The United States Army Corps of Engineers assessed and monitored levee integrity in affected areas to ensure authorities were aware of issues impacting public safety.
- The Indiana Utility and Regulatory Commission (“IURC”) worked to restore power to affected areas.
- Utilities and infrastructure had to be turned off, repaired, and replaced.
- Damage assessments were initiated with the assistance of personnel from numerous state and local agencies, as well as the utilization of unmanned aerial vehicles.
- “Indiana 211” has been utilized to receive damage reports and identify unmet needs.
- Public safety communications were issued.
- Family notifications for deceased victims were undertaken.
- The Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority (“IHCDA”) provided emergency housing vouchers to Hoosiers in need and authorized emergency hotel assistance.

Overall, at least nine (9) key state agencies have been deployed to respond to this disaster, twenty-two (22) counties have formally declared local disaster emergencies, and many volunteers have responded as well. They are doing everything they can to assist Hoosiers and respond to this disaster, which is historic and unprecedented.

State Fiscal Capacity

The most recent analysis of the Total Taxable Resources for the State of Indiana published by the Department of Treasury in 2025 was \$560,500,000,000.

According to the Bureau of Economic Analysis, Indiana’s 2025 Gross Domestic Product was \$545,230,000. Per capita personal income amounted to \$66,292.

The National Centers for Environmental Information categorizes Indiana Disaster Events by type of disaster, year they occurred, and estimated cost of the disaster. In 2024, there were a total of 8 disaster

events; 6 severe storms, and 2 tropical cyclone count events that accrued damages to Indiana Hoosiers. The combined estimated costs for all eight (8) disaster events range from \$1-2 billion in damages.

Our State has now experienced multiple historic and devastating weather events in 2026. In June of 2026, Indiana experienced its largest one-month outbreak of tornadic activity in the State's recorded weather history, with fifty-eight (58) confirmed tornadoes touching down across the state. Already, Indiana has set a record for confirmed tornadoes in one year, with eighty-one (81) tornadoes in 2026, and more severe weather events are expected throughout the remainder of the year. These events have put a strain on Indiana's resources and capability to adequately respond, and the struggle to respond to these devastating events is intensified by their occurrence in rapid succession. While Indiana has a dedicated fund established to provide disaster relief, and these funds have been made available to Hoosiers in need, the severity of this event exceeds the capacity of this fund and the State's ability to effectively respond to this event.

Early residential property damage estimates range from about \$550 million to over \$5 billion in total, and these estimates do not yet include every affected county (see Exhibit 8). At least 22,164 residential parcels were included in the data, and the scope of the damage is anticipated to increase as more data becomes available.

Based upon the above information (including the attached exhibits), and on behalf of my fellow Hoosiers, I respectfully request that you give your fullest consideration to my request and provide your reply as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike Braun". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Mike" and last name "Braun" clearly legible.

Mike Braun
Governor of Indiana

Enclosures

OMB No. 1660-0009/FEMA Form 010-0-13

Exhibit 1: White River flood levels

Exhibit 2: Executive Order

Exhibit 3: Counties that have declared a local disaster

Exhibits 4-7: CDC 2022 SVI Data

Exhibit 8: NWS 14-day Experimental Flood Inundation and Residential Parcels Maps