



FEMA

January 2, 2018

Governor Greg Abbott
Office of the Governor
State Insurance Building
1100 San Jacinto
Austin, TX 78701

Dear Governor Abbott:

On September 20, 2017, you and Attorney General Ken Paxton wrote to President Donald Trump requesting that the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) define "private nonprofit facility" under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (Stafford Act) "to include churches and other houses of worship." Under the Stafford Act, FEMA may provide financial assistance to certain private nonprofit organizations for the repair or replacement of facilities damaged or destroyed by a major disaster.

I write to inform you that FEMA has changed its Public Assistance Policy and Program Guide (PAPPG), adding as eligible "Activities of community centers or houses of worship open to the general public, without regard to their secular or religious nature." Further, FEMA has removed from the PAPPG language stating that facilities used primarily for religious activities are not eligible. Effective for any major disaster declared on or after August 23, 2017, private nonprofit organizations operating a house of worship are now eligible under the FEMA Public Assistance Program.

If you have any further questions about this policy change, please contact Assistant Administrator Alex Amparo at (202) 212-1980.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Brock Long", with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Brock Long
Administrator

cc: George A. Robinson, Regional Administrator, FEMA Region VI
W. Nim Kidd, CEM, Assistant Director, TDEM