Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

February 18, 2021

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
President of the United States
The White House
Washington, DC

Dear President Biden:

We write in support of the State of Louisiana's request for a federal emergency declaration due to the ongoing winter weather event. It is clear that due to lasting impacts from a record-setting hurricane season and the COVID-19 pandemic, the response to this event is beyond the already strained capabilities of the state and local governments.

As you are no doubt aware, this weather system has caused severe utility disruptions throughout much of the country over the past several days. In Louisiana, 47 out of 64 parishes have issued emergency declarations. As of February 16, approximately 200,000 Louisianians were without power. Additionally, as of yesterday, approximately one-fifth of the state's population was under a boil water advisory, and nearly 50,000 people were without water altogether.

While hospitals and nursing homes are generally better equipped to withstand severe weather events due to more redundant and robust infrastructure, the ongoing utility challenges have proved too difficult for many facilities to overcome. Several hospitals have lost ready access to water, and many hospitals and nursing homes are currently running on generator power.

Sadly, the Louisiana Department of Health reports three fatalities due to this ongoing event. Given the severity of the situation and the current struggles of hospitals and nursing homes, we remain concerned that conditions will continue to deteriorate without federal assistance. As such, we respectfully urge you issue an emergency declaration for the State of Louisiana. Thank you for your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,

Bill Cassidy, M.D.
United States Senator

John Kennedy
United States Senator

Mike Johnson
Member of Congress

Steve Scalise
Member of Congress

Clay Higgins
Member of Congress

Garret Graves
Member of Congress