



One Hundred Eighteenth Congress
Committee on Homeland Security
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

November 22, 2024

Ms. Marn'i Washington
[Address Redacted]

Dear Ms. Washington:

The Committee on Homeland Security (Committee) is investigating the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) potential discrimination against disaster victims based on political affiliation. On November 8, 2024, the media reported that you instructed workers to "avoid homes advertising Trump" when surveying damage to identify residents who may qualify for federal disaster relief aid in Lake Placid, Florida following Hurricane Milton.¹ This guidance was reportedly conveyed both verbally and through a group chat. Leaked images show that government workers recorded when they did not contact the residents of several homes that had Trump signs or flags, providing explanations such as "Trump sign, no contact per leadership."²

While FEMA may maintain that this was an isolated incident, you suggested in a recent interview that this practice of discrimination was widespread throughout FEMA, including in disaster response efforts in North Carolina.³ Government discrimination against American citizens based on a political sign or flag promoting a particular candidate is not only an outrageous abuse of power and a serious betrayal of the public trust, but a direct violation of the First Amendment. This discrimination has no place in our government, and the Committee is determined to ensure that such actions do not occur again in any of FEMA's operations.

The Committee seeks to uncover the complete nature and extent of FEMA's misconduct in withholding federal assistance from Americans based on political affiliation. Your observations and experience with FEMA's Disaster Survival Assistance Task Force are vital to the Committee's investigation. Therefore, we request that you contact the Committee on Homeland Security Majority staff at (202) 226-8417 to schedule a transcribed interview as soon as possible, but no later than 5:00 p.m. on November 25, 2024.

¹ Leif Le Mahieu, *EXCLUSIVE: FEMA Official Ordered Relief Workers To Skip Houses With Trump Signs*, THE DAILY WIRE, Nov. 8, 2024, <https://www.dailywire.com/news/exclusive-fema-official-ordered-relief-workers-to-skip-houses-with-trump-signs>.

² *Id.*

³ Brittany Chain, *FEMA Worker Marni Washington Breaks Silence on Not Helping Trump-voting Hurricane Victims*, THE DAILY MAIL, Nov. 12, 2024, <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14069059/fema-worker-marni-washington-fired-breaks-silence-trump-voting-hurricane-victims.html>.

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Per Rule X of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Committee on Homeland Security is the principal committee of jurisdiction for overall homeland security policy and has special oversight of “all Government activities relating to homeland security, including the interaction of all departments and agencies with the Department of Homeland Security.”

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



MARK E. GREEN, M.D.
Chairman
Committee on Homeland Security



DAN BISHOP
Chairman
Subcommittee on Oversight,
Investigations, and Accountability



ANTHONY D'ESPOSITO
Chairman
Subcommittee on Emergency
Management and Technology

cc: The Honorable Bennie G. Thompson, Ranking Member
Committee on Homeland Security

The Honorable Glenn Ivey, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Oversight, Investigations, and Accountability

The Honorable Troy Carter, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Emergency Management and Technology