

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

September 19, 2023

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Secretary Vilsack:

We write in support of the State of Florida's request for the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to issue a Disaster Declaration for Florida's counties that were impacted by Hurricane Idalia, and urge you to make assistance available immediately in the form of state block grants to support Florida's farmers and agricultural producers as they recover from the destructive impacts of the storm.

Florida's growers have a unique and vital role in the American food economy because Florida is one of the only locations in the United States where major agricultural production can occur in the winter and spring months. As such, Florida's agricultural industry feeds more than 100 million Americans who live along the eastern seaboard, when they otherwise do not have access to domestically grown fresh food. To support the growers and producers who were affected by Hurricane Idalia, and to ensure that they can recover from losses and continue their important service of feeding America, the expeditious approval of a Disaster Declaration is necessary to have a successful winter and spring harvest season.

Your support for the State of Florida's request would make a meaningful impact for our growers and will assist in their recovery to ensure they can continue to contribute to our food security and national security.

Thank you for your prompt consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Rick Scott
United States Senator



Marco Rubio
United States Senator



Maria Elvira Salazar
United States Representative



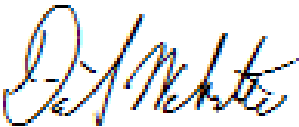
Scott Franklin
United States Representative



Kat Cammack
United States Representative



Gus M. Bilirakis
United States Representative



Daniel Webster
United States Representative



John Rutherford
United States Representative



Cory Mills
United States Representative



Michael Waltz
United States Representative



Neal P. Dunn, M.D.
United States Representative



W. Gregory Steube
United States Representative



Aaron Bean
United States Representative



Vern Buchanan
United States Representative

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Byron Donalds
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Bill Posey
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Laurel Lee
United States Representative



Jared Moskowitz
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Carlos Gimenez
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