

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR  
KE KIA'ĀINA



EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS  
KE KE'ENA O KE KIA'ĀINA

March 23, 2026

The Honorable Donald J. Trump  
President of the United States  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20500

THROUGH: Mr. Robert Fenton, Jr., Regional Administrator  
Federal Emergency Management Agency, Region IX  
1111 Broadway, Suite 1200  
Oakland, California 94607-4052

Dear Mr. President:

Under Section 401 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 5121–5207, and 44 C.F.R. § 206.36, I respectfully request that you declare a Major Disaster for the State of Hawai'i due to the severe and compounding impacts of two consecutive Kona Low weather systems that struck the State from March 10–16, 2026, and again beginning on March 19, 2026, with impacts continuing as the system moves across the islands. The second storm occurred before the State could stabilize critical infrastructure damaged during the first, resulting in extensive, statewide impacts.

Both storms required significant emergency protective measures, including evacuation orders, high-water rescues, swift-water rescues, and helicopter extractions. During the first storm, evacuations such as the Otake Camp evacuation on O'ahu were necessary to protect residents from rapidly worsening conditions. During the second storm, approximately 5,000 residents on O'ahu's North Shore were ordered to evacuate due to rapidly rising floodwaters, and emergency responders completed more than 230 rescues on March 20 alone, supported by the Hawai'i National Guard and assets staged by the U.S. Coast Guard.

Severe weather from both systems generated large quantities of debris, including fallen trees, mud, rockslides, and slope failures. This debris obstructed major highways, local roads, and critical access routes. Both events required sustained debris removal operations across all counties to clear landslides, reopen roads, and restore emergency access.

Extensive damage to roads and bridges occurred statewide. The first storm caused washouts and closures on Pi'ilani Highway, Hāna Highway, South Kīhei Road, Kula Highway, and Honoapi'ilani Highway, temporarily isolating portions of Hāna on Maui. Hawai'i County experienced closures along Highways 11 and 130, while O'ahu sustained closures on Kalaniana'ole Highway and Pali Highway due to landslides and flooding. Kaua'i reported closures on Ho'one Road and Puolo Road. The second system caused further transportation damage, including lane collapse and structural compromise on Farrington Highway, additional closures along Kamehameha Highway, Pali Highway, and Kalaniana'ole Highway, and severe flooding and washouts on Maui, Moloka'i, and access routes approaching Haleakalā National Park. Kamehameha V Highway on Moloka'i became impassable between mile markers 0.5–10.

Threats to water control facilities—including dams and reservoirs—were significant during both storms. The first storm triggered Emergency Action Plan activation at Wahiawā Reservoir as water levels approached spillway elevation; Nu'uuanu Reservoir #1 required continuous pumping operations and lane closures on Pali Highway to prevent overtopping; and Maui's Kehalani Retention Basin and Waikamoi Dam experienced dangerous rises and overtopping due to intense rainfall. The second storm intensified these hazards, with Wahiawā Reservoir peaking at 85.29 feet, surpassing its 80-foot spillway and prompting immediate downstream evacuations. Helemano 6 Reservoir and Upper Helemano Reservoir also reached elevated EAP stages, necessitating 24-hour monitoring and protective actions.

Multiple public buildings and critical facilities were damaged, including Kula Hospital, which sustained significant water intrusion, flooding, and infrastructure damage, requiring the relocation of patients and disruption of clinical operations. Several county buildings, public safety facilities, and community sites across the islands experienced flooding, utility service interruptions, and damage requiring emergency stabilization.

Severe impacts to public utilities occurred during both storms. Water systems suffered main breaks, widespread service outages, and failures of pumping stations due to extended power loss. Maui County reported water outages affecting more than 200 homes and had to deploy water buffaloes to multiple Upcountry communities, while

Hawai'i County implemented islandwide water restrictions. Wastewater discharges occurred on O'ahu, requiring immediate public health advisories. The second storm caused Hawaiian Electric to de-energize major circuits on the North Shore of O'ahu for life safety, leaving 7,680 customers without power, with 2,151 customers still without service as of March 22. Additional Boil Water Notices and Brown Water Advisories were issued for O'ahu, Maui, Hawai'i Island, and Kaua'i. Wastewater discharges were reported at Ahuimanu Stream, Nu'upia Pond, Kawa Stream, Kailua Regional, Kalihi Street, and other O'ahu sites.

Both storms placed heavy demands on mass care and sheltering services. During the first system, shelters housed up to 199 occupants and remained open through March 16 on O'ahu and Maui. During the second system, ten shelters supported 149 evacuees on March 20 across O'ahu and Maui County. Voluntary organizations, including American Red Cross partners, provided sustained feeding and support operations.

The storms also caused significant impacts to airports and aviation systems. During the first system, Kona International Airport experienced system failures affecting FIDS and PA systems, while cancellations and diversions stranded more than 450 passengers across Maui and Honolulu. During the second system, Dillingham (Kawaihāpai) Airport remains closed through March 24, and widespread inter-island flight disruptions continued across O'ahu and Maui due to flood-related hazards and infrastructure impacts.

### **Damage Estimates**

Early statewide assessments from the first storm indicated damages exceeding \$400 million, primarily to public infrastructure including roads, bridges, water systems, wastewater systems, drainage systems, airports, and medical facilities. With the impacts from the second storm, total statewide damages from both systems may exceed \$1 billion. These figures remain preliminary, as the State is still receiving reports from state and county departments, and Joint Preliminary Damage Assessments (JPDAs) with FEMA Region IX began today to refine and validate these estimates.

While Joint Preliminary Damage Assessments (JPDAs) are underway in coordination with FEMA Region IX across all affected islands, state and county leadership teams are concurrently conducting detailed assessments to verify damage, support recovery operations, restore essential services, and identify emerging unmet needs. Once

JPDAs are completed and the State has refined and validated the damage and cost estimates, Hawai'i will submit an addendum to this request with updated information.

Given the severity, magnitude, and compounded statewide impacts of these two destructive storm systems, the State of Hawai'i respectfully requests:

- A Presidential Major Disaster Declaration for the State of Hawai'i;
- Public Assistance Categories A–G for all affected counties;
- Individual Assistance for households where Joint PDAs confirm eligibility; and
- A 90% federal cost share, as combined damages far exceed the State's cost share adjustment threshold under 44 C.F.R. § 206.47

I certify that the government of the State of Hawai'i will assume all applicable non-federal shared costs as required by the Stafford Act for this emergency. I have designated Mr. James Barros, Administrator of the Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency (HI-EMA), as the State Coordinating Officer and Governor's Authorized Representative for this emergency. He is authorized to provide any further information, assurances, requests or justification on my behalf. He can be reached at (808) 733-4300, or via email at james.barros@hawaii.gov.

Mahalo,



Josh Green, M.D.

Governor, State of Hawai'i

- c: Mr. Don Aweau, Executive Officer, Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency  
Mr. Brian Fisher, Public Assistance, Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency  
Mr. Matthew Wall, Public Assistance, Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency  
Mr. Craig Iha, Deputy Attorney General, State of Hawai'i, Department of the Attorney General  
Mr. Rusty Spray, Administrative Services Officer, State of Hawai'i, Department of Defense

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY  
Federal Emergency Management Agency  
**REQUEST FOR PRESIDENTIAL DISASTER DECLARATION**  
**MAJOR DISASTER OR EMERGENCY**

OMB Control Number 1660-0009  
Expires 06/30/2026  
1. Request Date Mar 23, 2026

**Burden Disclosure Notice**

Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 9 hours per response. The burden estimate includes the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and submitting the form. This collection of information is required to obtain a benefit. You are not required to respond to this collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. Send comments regarding the accuracy of the burden estimate and any suggestions for reducing the burden to: Information Collections Management, Department of Homeland Security, Federal Emergency Management Agency, 500 C Street SW, Washington, DC 20472, Paperwork Reduction Project (1660-0009). **NOTE: Do not send your completed form to this address.**

Completion of this form including applicable attachments satisfies legal requirements for emergency and major disaster declaration requests under 42 U.S.C. §§ 5170 and 5191, respectively, as implemented at 44 C.F.R. §§ 206.35 and 206.36. Failure to use this form may result in a failure to meet these requirements and/or a delay in processing the request.

2a. Name of State (as defined in Stafford Act 102, 42 U.S.C. § 5122) or Indian tribal government requesting declaration.  State of Hawaii	2b. Population (as reported by 2020 Census) or estimated population of Indian tribal government's damaged area(s). <u>1,455,271</u>
---	---

3. Governor's or Tribal Chief Executive's Name Governor Josh Green M.D.	4. Designation of State or Tribal Coordinating Officer upon declaration (if available) and phone number James DS Barros 808-369-3673
--	---

5. Designation of Governor's Authorized Representative or Tribal Chief Executive Representative upon declaration (if available) and phone number  
 James DS Barros 808-369-3673

6. Declaration Request For:  Major Disaster (Stafford Act Sec. 401)  Emergency (Stafford Act Sec. 501 (a))

7. Incident Period: Beginning Date Mar 10, 2026 End Date \_\_\_\_\_ or  Continuing

*If requesting a "continuing" incident period, enclose an official statement from a qualified Federal Government agency acknowledged as a national authority in a specific incident field (e.g., United States Geological Survey for seismic incidents, the National Weather Service for flooding).*

7b. Type of Incident (Check all that apply)

Drought     Earthquake     Explosion     Fire     Flood     Hurricane     Landslide     Mudslide  
 Severe Storm     Snowstorm  
 (rain, high water, wind-driven, rain, hail, lightning)     (Must include Enclosure D: Historic and Current Snowfall Data)     Straight-Line Winds  
 Tidal Wave     Tornado     Tropical Depression     Tropical Storm     Tsunami     Volcanic Eruption     Winter Storm  
 Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

8. Description of damages (Short description of impacts of disaster on affected area and population). Include additional details in enclosed Governor's or Tribal Chief Executive's cover letter.  
 Critical transportation routes were blocked by landslides, flooding, erosion, and debris. Maui County experienced a washout of Pi'ilani Highway, widespread closures along Hana Highway, South Kihei Road, Kula Highway, and Honoapi'ilani Highway, temporarily isolating the Hāna area. Hawai'i County reported closures across Highways 11 and 130 and numerous rural routes, while the City/County of Honolulu faced landslides on Kalaniana'ole Highway and Pali Highway, additional flooding, and a gas line disruption at Pacific Heights, and extensive damage to Daniel K Inouye Airport. City/County of Honolulu also experienced extensive road damage throughout the County. Kaua'i County experienced closures of Ho'one Road and Puolo Road due to flooding. These disruptions impeded emergency response, isolated communities, and significantly disrupted normal community functioning.

9. Description of the nature and amount of State and local or Indian tribal government resources which have been or will be committed. Include additional details in enclosed Governor's or Tribal Chief Executive's cover letter.  
 Emergency Operations teams from all counties and the State of Hawaii, Hawaii National Guard, all State and County ESF's and partners.

10. Joint Preliminary Damage Assessment\*

Individual Assistance    Dates Performed **Requested** Mar 20, 2026    **Start** Mar 23, 2026    **End** \_\_\_\_\_

Individual Assistance Accessibility Problems (Areas that could not be accessed, and why)  
Individual Assistance Damage Assessments are being conducted in all affected counties beginning 3/23/2026

Public Assistance    Dates Performed **Requested** Mar 20, 2026    **Start** Mar 23, 2026    **End** \_\_\_\_\_

Public Assistance Accessibility Problems (Areas that could not be accessed, and why)  
Public Assistance Damage Assessments are being conducted in all affected counties beginning 3/23/2026.

11. Programs and Areas Requested

Individual Assistance  N/A     Individuals and Households Program     Crisis Counseling Program     Disaster Unemployment Assistance  
 All     Disaster Case Management     Disaster Legal Services     Small Business Administration (SBA) Disaster Assistance

For the following jurisdictions, specify programs and areas (counties, parishes, independent cities; for Indian tribal government, list tribe(s) and/or tribal area(s)) If additional space is needed, please enclose additional documentation).  
All programs for all Kauai, City and County of Oahu, Maui and Hawaii Counties.

For States, identify Federally-recognized Tribes in the requested counties (if applicable).  
None

Please see **Enclosure A: Supplemental Information for Individual Assistance** for additional information in support of this request\*.

*\*Not Required for Emergency Declaration Request*

11. Programs and Areas Requested (Continued)

Public Assistance  N/A  Debris Removal (Category A)  Emergency Protective Measures (Category B)  Permanent Work (Categories C-G)\* (not available for Emergency Declaration Requests)

For the following jurisdictions, specify programs and areas (counties, parishes, independent cities; for Indian tribal government, list tribe(s) and/or tribal area(s)). If additional space is needed or your request includes different categories of work for different jurisdictions; please enclose additional documentation.

All categories, A-G for Kauai, City/County of Honolulu, Maui and Hawaii County and State of Hawaii.

For States, identify Federally-recognized Tribes included in the requested counties (if applicable).

None

Please see **Enclosure B: Supplemental Information for Public Assistance** for additional information in support of this request\*.

**Indemnification for Debris Removal Activity**

I do not anticipate the need for debris removal.

I anticipate the need for debris removal, which poses an immediate threat to lives, public health and safety. Pursuant to Sections 403 and 407 of the Stafford Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 5170b & 5173, the State or Indian tribal government agrees to indemnify and hold  harmless the United States of America for any claims arising from the removal of debris or wreckage for this disaster. The State or Indian tribal government agrees that debris removal from public and private property will not occur until the landowner signs an unconditional authorization for the removal of debris.

**Request for Direct Federal Assistance**

I do not request direct Federal assistance at this time.

I request direct Federal assistance for work and services to save lives and protect property, and:

a. I request the following type(s) of assistance:

b. List of reasons why State and local or Indian tribal government cannot perform, or contract for, required work and services.

c. In accordance with 44 C.F.R. § 206.208, the State or Indian tribal government agrees that it will, with respect to direct Federal assistance: (1) Provide without cost to the United States all lands, easements, and rights-of-ways necessary to accomplish the approved work; (2) Hold and save the United States free from damages due to the requested work, and shall indemnify the Federal Government against any claims arising from such work; (3) Provide reimbursement to FEMA for the non-Federal share of the cost of such work in accordance with the provisions of the FEMA-State or FEMA-Tribe Agreement ; and (4) Assist the performing Federal agency in all support and local jurisdictional matters.

**Request for Snow Assistance**

N/A  I request snow assistance.

Snow assistance for the following jurisdictions (Specify counties, independent cities or tribes and/or tribal areas).

Please see **Enclosure D: Historic and Current Snowfall Data** for additional information in support of this request\*.

\*Not Required for Emergency Declaration Request

11. Programs and Areas Requested (Continued)

Hazard Mitigation\*  Statewide **OR**

For the following specific counties, parishes, independent cities or tribes and/or tribal areas.  
Kauai, City and County of Honolulu, Maui and Hawaii Counties.

12. Mitigation Plan Information\*

a. Mitigation Plan Expiration Date September 9, 2028 b. Type of Plan  Enhanced  Standard

13. Other Federal Agency Programs

I do not anticipate requirements from Other Federal Agencies  I do anticipate requirements from Other Federal Agencies

Please see **Enclosure C**: Requirements for Other Federal Agency Programs for additional information in support of this request\*.

14. Findings and Certifications

I certify the following:

- a. I have determined that this incident is of such severity and magnitude that effective response is beyond the capabilities of the State and the affected local government or Indian tribal government and that supplementary federal assistance is necessary.
- b. In response to this incident, I have taken appropriate action under State or tribal law and have directed the execution of the State or Tribal Emergency Plan on March 10, 2026 in accordance with the Stafford Act.
- c. The State and local governments, or Indian tribal government will assume all applicable non-Federal share of costs required by the Stafford Act.

15. List of Enclosures and Supporting Documentation

- Cover Letter  Enclosure A (Individual Assistance)\*  Enclosure B (Public Assistance)\*
- Enclosure C (Requirements for Other Federal Agency Programs)  Enclosure D (Historic and Current Snowfall Data)
- Additional Supporting Documentation \_\_\_\_\_

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Governor's or Tribal Chief Executive's Signature

3/23/26  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

If anyone except the Governor or Tribal Chief Executive signs this document, please provide the documentation that establishes that this individual has the legal authority to act on behalf of the Governor or Tribal Chief Executive.

\*Not Required for Emergency Declaration Request