

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

November 1, 2019

The Honorable Sonny Perdue
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Perdue:

We are writing to express our full support for the request submitted by the State of North Dakota for a secretarial disaster declaration due to extreme early season snowstorms and excessive rainfall. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

On November 1, 2019, Governor Burgum submitted a request for a secretarial disaster declaration for 47 counties in North Dakota based upon the excess rain and snowstorms that are adversely affecting the area. These counties were identified, with the assistance of local Farm Service Agency staff, as those meeting the criteria for at least a 30% crop production loss.

September 2019 was the wettest on record for North Dakota. Since September 1, rainfall totals in areas of northwest and northcentral North Dakota reached upwards of eight inches, accounting for more than 500% of the normal average precipitation for the same time period. This extreme rainfall has caused significant delays for those attempting to harvest their crops. The latest crop progress report indicates that producers have harvested none of the corn or sunflower acres, very few of the sugarbeet and soybean acres, and only half of the potato acres. Combined with recent heavy snowfall, farmers have been left with a crop worth only a fraction of its original value, or no value at all.

We are grateful for the actions taken this year by the Trump Administration to bring relief to North Dakotans struggling due to adverse weather conditions. For example, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has designated 19 counties as primary natural disaster areas due to widespread flooding this spring. Unfortunately, our producers are now facing severe losses from snowstorms and excess rainfall, disaster events which require a secretarial designation to enact eligibility for crucial programs like the Wildfire and Hurricane Indemnity Program Plus (WHIP+).

We urge you to approve a secretarial disaster declaration as soon as possible so that the necessary federal resources are available to help our producers and assist our state during this hardship. Thank you for your prompt attention to this request.

Sincerely,



JOHN HOEVEN
U.S. Senator



KEVIN CRAMER
U.S. Senator



KELLY ARMSTRONG
U.S. Congressman