

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 11, 2018

President Donald J. Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania, NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We request your urgent action on Hawai'i Governor David Ige's request for a presidential disaster declaration for areas impacted by ongoing Kīlauea Volcano eruptions, which began on May 3, 2018. A copy is enclosed for your reference.

The eruption has opened 15 fissures of erupting lava thus far, which has destroyed all structures in its path as it moves slowly toward the ocean. The U.S. Geological Survey reports that more fissures are possible along Kīlauea's east rift zone, and continued eruptions of lava are likely. The eruptions are also expelling toxic fumes that can damage the eyes and the respiratory system. In addition, Hawai'i Island has been the epicenter of a storm of earthquakes associated with the volcanic activity, the largest measuring a magnitude of 6.9. Finally, the steady lowering of the lava lake at the summit of Kīlauea Volcano poses an added threat for explosive eruptions of rock and ash into the Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park and surrounding communities.

To date, the volcanic activity has destroyed over 30 homes and structures and damaged the only major traffic artery, Highway 130, causing gridlock during the continuous evacuation of thousands of residents, along with livestock and pets. Farms and endemic native forests are likely to suffer considerable or irreparable damage from the volcanic activity and associated detrimental effects from fumes and acid rain.

Based on the severity of the damage and preliminary assessments, it is clear that recovery will overwhelm state and county resources. Governor Ige has requested that you issue a presidential

disaster declaration to allow state and county officials to apply for vital federal assistance available. We urge your expeditious approval of his request.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



BRIAN SCHATZ
United States Senator



COLLEEN HANABUSA
Member of Congress



MAZIE K. HIRONO
United States Senator



TULSI GABBARD
Member of Congress