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Ms. Janet Golrick
Deputy Assistant Secretary for Grants Programs (Acting)
Office of Community Planning and Development
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
Washington, DC 20410-7000

Dear Ms. Golrick:

On behalf of my constituents, I write to request that you extend the reimbursement period for Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) funds on eligible pre-application costs for Hurricane Harvey recovery.

As you may know, the City of Houston and the Texas General Land Office (GLO) have disagreed about the administration of recovery funds. The city and the GLO have come to an agreement over the administration of these funds, but there is little time left to process applications that have been delayed by a jurisdictional dispute not of the applicants' making.

The Houston region in general and my constituents in particular suffered the devastating impacts of Hurricane Harvey. Congress intended to deliver disaster recovery aid for Harvey survivors – and authorized it swiftly, including authorizing funds to reimburse homeowners who repaired their homes with their own funds before federal assistance could be distributed.

Unfortunately, many residents have yet to receive any reimbursement for these authorized home repair expenses. The jurisdictional dispute and resulting confusion about the process has left many people who are eligible to recover without the means to submit and follow-up on their applications. I am pleased that the city and the GLO have reached agreement, but it will take time to ensure that all applicants have the information they need and that all applications can be processed.

It is for these reasons that I request a one-year extension of the deadline for CDBG-DR funds for pre-application cost reimbursement, from December 31, 2020 to December 31, 2021. The Supplemental Appropriations for Disaster Relief Requirement Act, 2017 (Public Law (P.L.) 115-56) provides that these funds are intended to assist people recover from Hurricane Harvey in a variety of ways, including reimbursements. Extending the deadline will make it possible to carry out this purpose and ensure that affected residents can benefit fully from these appropriated CDBG-DR funds.

I appreciate your attention to this matter, and I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Lizzie Fletcher". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "L" and "F".

Lizzie Fletcher
Member of Congress