



May 4, 2023

The Honorable Deanne Criswell
Administrator
Federal Emergency Management Agency
500 C Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20024

Dear Administrator Criswell:

I request the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) work with communities along our southern border to improve communication and extend reimbursement timelines. We must support our local elected and non-profit leaders as they prepare for and process migrant arrivals in their communities.

I support FEMA's ongoing work with border communities to provide migrants with food, shelter, transportation, and more. FEMA's support is critical for many local leaders as they juggle immigration-related stressors in their communities with the need to provide day-to-day services, like emergency and sanitation services, for residents. To that end, we must prepare for a potential migration surge once the Title 42 public health declaration expires on May 11th.

As you know, the Emergency Food and Shelter Program provides reimbursement for vital services provided to migrants as they are processed. However, the mayors and non-profit leaders I spoke to raised concerns about the program's guidance, including the 90-day limit on shelter services, rent, and utility assistance, and the narrow parameters on funding for certain services like transportation. While I appreciate the importance of oversight, I am concerned that the restrictions on these funds may be hindering the ability of local leaders on the frontlines to plan for long-term solutions, effectively use federal resources, and support both the migrants and communities they represent.

I request your full and fair consideration to, within your authority, better support our counties, towns, and non-profits. While I recognize that multiple agencies are involved in administering federal assistance and programs at the southern border, there are definitive steps FEMA can take to improve our processing of migrants in these communities.

Thank you in advance for your consideration and I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Ruben Gallego
MEMBER OF CONGRESS