



**FEMA**

OCT 9 2019

The Honorable Darren Soto  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1507 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Soto:

Thank you for your letter on behalf of the Polk County School District regarding their Hurricane Irma recovery projects. Assistant Administrator Turi asked that I respond on his behalf.

FEMA's Public Assistance Program helps communities recover from disasters by providing reimbursements for debris removal, life-saving emergency protective measures, and repairs to public infrastructure. In order to provide this funding, FEMA works with our state and local partners to identify disaster related damage, verify the damage at each site, and compile the required documentation.

Following Hurricane Irma, the School District submitted 167 projects for reimbursement under the Public Assistance Program. While FEMA has been able to successfully develop 37 of these projects, 123 were lacking critical documentation and were determined to be non-compliant. Subsequently, the School District appealed FEMA's determination for 117 of these projects.

On October 7, 2019, FEMA issued its first appeal determination, finding that with its appeal the School District had submitted documentation to proceed with the development of their projects. In its first appeal submission, the School District provided a large quantity of data that was missing from its projects and committed to developing each project to include; an accurate damage description, a site inspection, and a scope of work to restore the damaged facility to its pre-disaster condition.

FEMA will proceed with the development of the 117 projects and will issue new determination memorandums should any work or costs be disallowed or determined ineligible.

If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Gracia B. Szczec", is written over a circular stamp. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Gracia B. Szczec  
Regional Administrator