

Fact check: Amid bipartisan praise for Biden hurricane response, Trump falsely claims reviews are 'universally' negative

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Former President and Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump speaks at a press conference in the Discovery Center on October 1, 2024, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Jim Vondruska/Getty Images North America/Getty Images

Washington (CNN) — Former President Donald Trump, seeking to capitalize politically on the devastation from Hurricane Helene, falsely claimed in a social media post on Thursday that <https://www.cnn.com/2024/10/03/politics/fact-check-trump-biden-hurricane-response/index.html>

GRADE for the way that they are handling the hurricane, especially in North Carolina.

Facts First: *Trump is wrong. The Biden administration's response to the hurricane has received bipartisan praise from political leaders in affected states.*

That praise has not been universal; there has also been some criticism and some ambivalence. But Trump's assertion that reviews for the Biden administration's handling of the crisis have been entirely negative is not true.

And this is just the latest Trump false claim on the subject of the administration's hurricane response.

On Monday, Trump incorrectly said that Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp hadn't been able to get Biden on the phone, though Kemp had said the same day that he had already spoken to Biden. And Trump baselessly claimed Monday that the federal government and the Democratic governor of North Carolina, Roy Cooper, were deliberately not helping residents of Republican communities in the state; Trump provided no evidence for the claim when a reporter pressed him about it.

Praise from Republican governors

Various Republican governors in the southeastern states hit by Hurricane Helene have praised the Biden administration's response, sometimes naming Biden in particular.

Republican South Carolina Gov. Henry McMaster said at a Tuesday press conference that federal assistance had "been superb," noting that Biden and Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg had both called and told him to let them know whatever the state needed. McMaster added that the administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Deanne Criswell, had also called. He said, "So we're getting assistance, and we're asking for everything we need."

Republican Virginia Gov. Glenn Youngkin said at a Monday press conference, "I'm incredibly appreciative of the rapid response and the cooperation from the federal team at FEMA." He specifically thanked Biden, among others, in a press release the day prior.

Republican Tennessee Gov. Bill Lee said at a Wednesday press conference that the response to his emergency declaration "was quick from the federal government," adding there was "a fast turnaround, frankly," in making the state eligible for some federal reimbursements.

At a Tuesday press conference, Lee spoke of a “rush” of officials “from the federal to the state to the local, the local emergency management agencies, local county mayors with tears in their eyes out there serving their people. There is a great deal of hope when you see what is behind the effort, the coordinated effort, in this community to begin to rebuild.”

Praise in North Carolina

Cooper, the North Carolina governor, has repeatedly praised the federal response. Sitting beside Biden during the president’s visit to North Carolina on Wednesday, Cooper said, “We’re grateful for the quick actions and close communications that we have had with the president and with the FEMA team,” adding moments later, “And Mr. President, we know that we have made a lot of asks of you, and we are grateful for your ear and for your actions.”

Cooper said in a briefing on Tuesday: “I briefed President Biden and Vice President Harris each on two occasions, and they have committed every resource available to this recovery. I appreciate the president’s quick approval of our major disaster declaration this weekend and his direction that FEMA Administrator Deanne Criswell will continue to be here on the ground,” saying that residents were already starting to receive assistance funds.

The Democratic mayor of the hard-hit North Carolina city of Asheville, Esther Manheimer, said on MSNBC on Tuesday: “We are seeing incredible help, from the federal government to the state to the private sector to the nonprofit sector, faith-based organizations, everyone pouring in here with their help.” She emphasized that rebuilding from the “catastrophic” situation would take a long time regardless.

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