

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

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MEMORANDUM

August 4, 2023

To: Members, Subcommittee on Government Operations and the Federal Workforce

From: Committee Staff

Re: Subcommittee field hearing titled “Weathering the Storm: Oversight of the Federal Response and Recovery Efforts in Southwestern Florida following Hurricane Ian”

On **Thursday, August 10, 2023, at 10:00 AM ET at Lakes Regional Library, 15290 Bass Road, Fort Myers, Florida 33919**, the Subcommittee on Government Operations and the Federal Workforce will host a hearing titled “Weathering the Storm: Oversight of the Federal Response and Recovery Efforts in Southwestern Florida following Hurricane Ian.”

I. BACKGROUND:

Hurricane Ian hit southwest Florida in September 2022, causing billions of dollars in damage and claiming over 160 lives. While federal agencies were quick to respond to Ian, the convoluted nature of the federal disaster response regime complicated recovery efforts immediately after the storm and since. While FEMA is technically charged with coordinating federal efforts following a disaster, over 30 agencies are involved in emergency response efforts. These complex interagency authorities, and the at times poor communication between federal agencies and the public, leave many residents unaware of federal benefits they may be entitled to following a hurricane. Southwest Florida continues to rebuild from Ian’s devastating impact, and many residents continue to struggle in their interactions with federal disaster response agencies.

II. HEARING PURPOSE:

This hearing will examine the role federal agencies played in response to Hurricane Ian, as well as southwest Florida’s efforts to rebuild from the storm. Specifically, Members will be able to inquire about the effectiveness of the federal response to Hurricane Ian, whether areas for improvement exist in the federal disaster response regime, and the nature and extent of Ian’s impact on communities in the region.

III. WITNESSES:

Federal Witnesses Panel

Mr. Brett Howard

Federal Coordinating Officer for Hurricane Ian (Apr. 2023 – Present)
Federal Emergency Management Agency

Mr. Thomas McCool

Federal Coordinating Officer for Hurricane Ian (Sept. 2022 – Apr. 2023)
Federal Emergency Management Agency

Mr. Francisco Sánchez

Associate Administrator, Office of Disaster Recovery & Resilience
Small Business Administration

Ms. Marion McFadden

Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, Community Planning and Development
Department of Housing and Urban Development

Local Witnesses Panel

Mr. Brian Hamman

Chairman and District 4 Commissioner
Lee County, Florida

Mr. Kevin B. Anderson

Mayor
Fort Myers, Florida

Mr. Chauncey Goss*

Chairman
South Florida Water Management District Governing Board

**Mr. Goss is testifying as a private citizen, not in his official capacity.*