



February 6, 2019

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**RE: PROTECTING MINNESOTA'S CAPACITY TO RESPOND TO DISASTERS**

We are writing in support of the Disaster Assistance Contingency Account. **The Minnesota Council on Foundations (MCF) and the co-signed foundations below strongly support adequate funding and replenishment for the Disaster Assistance Contingency Account.**

**The Disaster Assistance Contingency Account has been vital to providing aid to local communities after a natural disaster.** The Account was created in 2014 to support state and local disaster relief. According to the Association of Minnesota Emergency Managers, in its first three years (2014-2017), the account funded approximately \$30 million in state disaster assistance.

- 2 Federally declared disasters (\$16 million)
- 13 state declared disasters (\$14 million)
- 34 counties and 5 tribal nations (300 local jurisdictions)

It has continued to provide this vital aid to local communities in 2018 and into the present.

**Communities facing a disaster are best served when state government disaster relief is predictable and timely.** The Disaster Assistance Contingency Account was created so that the Department of Public Safety would have the resources to address immediate needs following a disaster without the legislature needing to call a special session. Marginalized communities tend to suffer the most when a disaster happens as their safety nets are often fragile or non-existent; unnecessary delays and uncertainty make conditions worse. MCF and its 165 members are committed to creating a more prosperous, inclusive, and equitable Minnesota by eliminating disparities, and MCF and the 10 co-signed foundations see adequately resourcing the Disaster Assistance Contingency Account as a way to reduce disparities in disaster relief.

**As grantmakers, we are best able to partner with government on disaster relief when roles are clear and funding streams are known.** When a disaster happens, grantmakers are regularly at the table to help with response, recovery and long-term resilience. Foundations play a key role during disasters, often being called on to make rapid-response grants, create emergency funds to collect and distribute donations, and convene the community to plan for their immediate and long-term recovery. Quick and reliable state funding to support disaster relief allows foundations to be effective partners and maximize their resources for the benefit of the community.

**The Minnesota Council on Foundations and the co-signed foundations below encourage you to prioritize "saving for a rainy day" by supporting and replenishing the Disaster Assistance Contingency Account.**

Respectfully,

Bob Tracy, Director of Public Policy and Communication  
Katina Mortensen, Program Manager for Public Policy

**Co-Signed by:**

A. Charlene Leach, Executive Director, PFund Foundation

Caryl Turnow, Executive Director, Central Minnesota Community Foundation

Diana Anderson, President & CEO, Southwest Initiative Foundation

Erik Torch, Co-Chair, MCF Public Policy Committee & Program Director, Northland Foundation

Holly Sampson, President, Duluth Superior Area Community Foundation

Karl Samp, Executive Director, Brainerd Lakes Area Community Foundation

Kathy Pfeffer, Executive Director, Alexandria Area Community Foundation

Sara Carlson, Executive Director, Willmar Area Community Foundation

Steve Joul, President & CEO, CommunityGiving

Tim Beaton, Executive Director, Fargo-Moorhead Area Foundation