



**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
Washington, DC 20515-4302

The Honorable William "Brock" Long  
Administrator  
Federal Emergency Management Agency  
500 C Street SW  
Washington, D.C. 20472

April 5, 2018

Dear Administrator Long:

The Lake Houston community has been devastated by the flooding caused by Hurricane Harvey. Thousands of homes have been damaged or destroyed and even today only 50% of the businesses in the community have reopened. Many homes are not yet repaired due to contractor shortages and other issues. To make matters even worse, recent rains have shown that the San Jacinto and Lake Houston are not able to hold nearly the capacity that they could hold in years past. Many estimates put the current capacity at 40% of original intended capacity.

In late March, 4-5 inches of rain caused the river and lake to reach flood stage. Minor flooding was experienced in some areas. This occurred even though the City of Houston preemptively lowered the levels of the lake from 42.5 to 40 feet. There can no longer be any doubt or debate that quick and decisive action must be taken. This is truly an emergency situation. If another flood occurs in the Lake Houston community just as it struggles to recover, it would be absolutely devastating to the community. The damage to the community would be so deep, it may never recover. We cannot allow that to occur.

In this light, I urge FEMA to support the emergency effort to allow the City of Houston to use existing debris removal funds to pay the local matching share for this project. I have recently discussed this possibility with Mayor Turner. Allowing this will ensure that the project can begin as soon as possible, hopefully within 4-6 weeks. With Hurricane season fast approaching, urgent and immediate action is necessary given the stakes the Lake Houston community faces. The cost of debris removal in the river and lake will be far less than the cost of another flood which damages homes and businesses in the area.

Please advise me if there is anything I can do to expedite this process. Contact me directly or my Chief of Staff Tim Tarpley at 202-225-6565 if you have any questions or need any additional information.

Respectfully,

TED POE  
Member of Congress