Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

April 30, 2014

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama:

In the wake of devastating weather events across the Southeastern United States this past Monday, we are writing to request your full consideration of Mississippi Governor Phil Bryant's request for a federal disaster declaration for Itawamba, Lee, Lowndes, Madison, Rankin, Wayne, and Winston Counties as well as hazard mitigation statewide.

We understand that the State of Mississippi and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) jointly continue to assess the damage across the state. Should Governor Bryant request federal disaster declarations for other counties, we are hopeful you will also give these requests your full consideration.

We have been encouraged by the efforts of FEMA to deploy rapidly to Mississippi to assist state and local officials in estimating the severity of the initial damage caused by a series of at least 14 tornado touchdowns across our state, one rated as devastating as EF-4. Citizens have lost loved ones, homes, and their livelihoods. Much of this destruction has occurred in parts of our state that have been particularly affected by our nation's current economic situation. Many of these counties also have poverty levels that are more than double the national average.

We know from our ongoing recovery in Mississippi from the effects of Hurricanes Katrina and Isaac as well as destructive tornados in Smithville in 2011 and Hattiesburg area in 2013, that significant resources and cooperation are necessary to recover fully from natural disasters as quickly as possible. We stand ready to face this new challenge by supporting the local communities, the State, and your administration as we work together to rebuild and renew areas destroyed by this major storm.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. Please do not hesitate to contact us should you need further assistance in this effort.

Sincerely,

THAD COCHRAN
United States Senator

ROGER WICKER
United States Senator

BENNIE THOMPSON
Member of Congress

GREGG HARPER
Member of Congress

ALAN NUNNELEE
Member of Congress

STEVEN PALAZZO
Member of Congress

cc:
The Honorable Jeh Johnson, Secretary, Department of Homeland Security
The Honorable Craig Fugate, Administrator, Federal Emergency Management Agency