

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-1011

July 16, 2025

The Honorable Brooke Rollins
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, DC 20250

The Honorable Tyler J. Harper
Commissioner
Georgia Department of Agriculture
19 Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive SW
Atlanta, GA 30334

Dear Secretary Rollins and Commissioner Harper:

After Hurricane Michael in 2018, it took Congress eight months to pass agricultural disaster assistance for Georgia farmers. In contrast, following Hurricane Helene last year, we appropriated disaster assistance for Georgia farmers within 90 days.

Now, more than nine months since the storm and more than six months since Congress appropriated disaster assistance, the State of Georgia and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) still have not finalized a block grant agreement to provide much-needed relief to Georgia farmers — this despite Secretary Rollins' May 6 testimony in response to my questions at an Appropriations Committee hearing that block grant negotiations with the State of Georgia would "move very, very quickly."

Although some funds have been made available at the national level through USDA, many of Georgia's farmers and producers who were most affected by Hurricane Helene are not eligible for this assistance and tell me they are instead counting on a block grant. The administration of this aid through a block grant program was a request from the State of Georgia — a request we in Congress were pleased to accommodate. However, the failure of USDA and the State of Georgia to conclude the block grant agreement has left many Georgia farmers and producers in limbo.

As noted above, it has been nine months since the storm and half a year since Congress appropriated these funds.

Within one week, please provide my office with an updated time frame for the completion of the block grant agreement.

Sincerely,



Jon Ossoff
United States Senator