

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

September 19, 2022

The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas  
Secretary of Homeland Security  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
245 Murray Lane, S.W.  
Washington, DC 20528

The Honorable Deanne Criswell  
Administrator  
Federal Emergency Management Agency  
500 C Street, S.W.  
Washington, DC 20024

Dear Secretary Mayorkas and Administrator Criswell:

We write to request your assistance in expediting the distribution of financial assistance—particularly through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Emergency Food and Shelter Program (EFSP)—to organizations providing humanitarian aid to migrants in Massachusetts.


Massachusetts has recently seen an uptick in migrant arrivals. This includes nearly 50 Venezuelans who arrived in Martha's Vineyard, and nearly 2,000 predominantly Haitian migrants who have arrived in Boston in recent months. The Commonwealth's local, municipal, federal, tribal, and non-governmental entities have proved to be very capable of providing dignified humanitarian assistance to people in need. We would like to note our thanks to FEMA Region 1 Regional Administrator Lori Ehrlich, and to the FEMA Region 1 team, for their good work and for their responsiveness to the Massachusetts Congressional delegation. We also thank you, Secretary Mayorkas, for your and your team's close monitoring of the situation in the Commonwealth and your communications with delegation members.

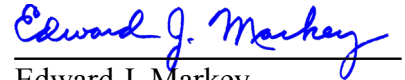
We would like to request that you use your administrative authorities to ensure that FEMA's EFSP is awarding funds as quickly as possible, and with as little bureaucratic delay as possible, to Massachusetts entities providing important assistance to migrants. In particular, we ask that you designate personnel to help ensure that these entities' applications for EFSP funding be expedited and, to the greatest extent possible, that the funding be granted up-front instead of on a reimbursement basis.

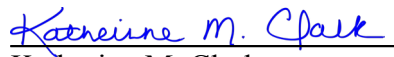
We have learned that a number of Massachusetts organizations that are doing critical work to assist those in need were unaware of the EFSP and therefore might not have a track record of receiving EFSP awards. We therefore also request that your designated personnel work to help entities that are doing important work on the ground, but which might not have previously received EFSP funding, are able to apply for and receive EFSP awards swiftly. Moreover, we ask that if Massachusetts entities seek for their humanitarian work other sources of funding that are within your purview, you work to ensure that this assistance is unlocked and disbursed as expeditiously as possible.


Massachusetts is showing itself fully capable of caring for those in need who arrive in the Commonwealth. We respectfully ask for your continued assistance to ensure that the federal government is a helpful partner to those doing important humanitarian work on the ground.


Sincerely,


  
Elizabeth Warren  
United States Senator


  
Edward J. Markey  
United States Senator


  
Katherine M. Clark  
Member of Congress


  
Seth Moulton  
Member of Congress


  
Jake Auchincloss  
Member of Congress

  
Ayanna Pressley  
Member of Congress

  
Lori Trahan  
Member of Congress

  
James P. McGovern  
Member of Congress

  
Stephen F. Lynch  
Member of Congress

  
William R. Keating  
Member of Congress