June 10, 2022

FEMA Administrator Deanne Criswell  
Federal Emergency Management Agency  
500 C St SW  
Washington, D.C. 20024

Dear Administrator Criswell,

We write today to inform you of the dangerous supply chain shortages affecting Florida’s electric cooperatives and municipalities. Labor shortages and competition from other industries for steel have made equipment procurement difficult. As a result, critical electric grid equipment delivery times have increased 20-fold in the past 2 years. Transformers, the most integral pieces in ensuring electricity to homes, took only 3 months to be delivered in 2018. Currently, delivery delays for transformers are averaging 52 to 75 months, and some manufacturers are not even taking orders.

This is particularly concerning given that the 2022 Atlantic hurricane season is forecasted to produce hurricanes and tropical storms of above-average strength. As the onset of the 2022 Atlantic hurricane season approaches, we urge FEMA to mitigate this issue before a severe hurricane or tropical storm devastates our Floridian communities.

Each year, Florida electric cooperatives and municipalities prepare for the upcoming hurricane season by stockpiling supplies. When disasters occur, destroyed equipment needs to be replaced to ensure quick power restoration. The severe delay of critical parts has made this preparation nearly impossible, leaving many electric companies without reserves. It would take only one hurricane or severe tropical storm to cause devastating damage to our constituents, and with the absence of a stockpile, power restoration for these communities would take substantially longer than previous years.

Local electric utilities play a critical role in the growth and development of the communities they serve. Unfortunately, these new supply chain issues adversely affect the growth and management of these communities. Without proper equipment, local utilities must triage parts, which delays upgrades and “non-essential” repairs. The weakened systems will make them more susceptible to damage when disaster occurs. FEMA must employ mitigation efforts with the local Florida electric community to ensure that transformers, bare wire, meters, and other electric grid equipment will be available ahead of the first disaster.
Sincerely,

Al Lawson  
Member of Congress

Kat Cammack  
Member of Congress

Neal Dunn  
Member of Congress

John H. Rutherford  
Member of Congress

Michael Waltz  
Member of Congress

Darren Soto  
Member of Congress

Gus Bilirakis  
Member of Congress

Kathy Castor  
Member of Congress
Brian Mast  
Member of Congress

Byron Donalds  
Member of Congress

Lois Frankel  
Member of Congress

Ted Deutch  
Member of Congress

Debbie Wasserman Schultz  
Member of Congress

Carlos Giménez  
Member of Congress

María Elvira Salazar  
Member of Congress

Bill Posey  
Member of Congress
Frederica Wilson  
Member of Congress

Daniel Webster  
Member of Congress

C. Scott Franklin  
Member of Congress

Charlie Crist  
Member of Congress

Val B. Demings  
Member of Congress

Mario Díaz-Balart  
Member of Congress

Stephanie Murphy  
Member of Congress