



TINA KOTEK  
GOVERNOR

January 27, 2026

The Honorable Kristi Noem, Secretary  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
Washington, D.C. 20528

RE: Delayed FEMA Payments

Dear Secretary Noem:

I am writing to elevate critical concerns regarding significant delays in FEMA's payment review processes and their cascading impact on Oregon's mitigation and recovery efforts. These delays are creating severe challenges for our state and local jurisdictions and jeopardizing awarded, phased, and newly applied-for grants.

The situation has reached a point where your immediate action is necessary to prevent financial hardship, ensure compliance, and prevent disruption to critical projects. While Oregon currently has 51 projects totaling nearly \$200 million in your enhanced review queue, I am asking for your attention on four projects and one grant that are at the highest risk and have the greatest local impact:

- **City of Medford Hazardous Fuels Reduction:** \$4.5 million project with two requests in the queue – **\$1.3 million since July 30 and \$2.6 million since November 1.** Medford (affected by the 2020 Labor Day Wildfires) incurred these costs and has awaited reimbursement to complete this project since July 3, 2025.
- **Douglas County Public Safety Radio Infrastructure:** **\$17.5 million project with \$3.5 million** pending review since November 14, 2025. This upgrade is critical for emergency communications that were damaged during the 2020 wildfires.
- **Consumer Powers Inc. Utility Mitigation:** **\$6 million project with \$3.9 million pending** since November 14, 2025. This utility serves rural communities severely impacted by the 2020 wildfires. This project seeks to mitigate future risk.
- **Electrical Distribution System under DR-4296:** **\$371,000 pending obligation** – the last project from a 2016 major disaster declaration. Once obligated, Oregon can close out its oldest event.
- **COVID-related projects under DR-4499:** **\$149 million** for hospitals, schools, and state medical authorities pending obligation for over 300 days.

Finally, Oregon and its local partners have **\$1,342,212.76 in pending State Management Cost reimbursements** which affects our ability to manage grants effectively. Delays from the enhanced review process have forced jurisdictions to use unbudgeted or emergency funds to operate, slowing preparedness, mitigation and recovery activities that are essential for future resilience. Communities

Secretary Noem  
January 27, 2026  
Page 2

are floating projects with local funds, creating hardship for those who counted on timely federal support with minimal delay.

I urge you to act swiftly to resolve these delays and release pending reimbursements. Doing so will support Oregon's recovery and strengthen our ability to protect against future disasters.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and for your continued support of Oregon's recovery efforts. My Director of Emergency Management, Erin McMahon, is available to provide any additional information or assistance needed to facilitate these actions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tina Kotek", with a stylized, cursive script.

Governor Tina Kotek