



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

October 12, 2020

Governor John Bel Edwards
Office of the Governor
PO Box 94004
Baton Rouge, LA 70804

Governor Edwards:

Sir, I am writing to you today on behalf of the citizens of Louisiana that have been afflicted by Hurricanes Laura and Delta. During the aftermath of Hurricane Laura, one issue that quickly became paramount was the need for mosquito abatement spraying. The infestation of mosquitos and lack of sufficient spraying has adversely impacted both citizens and livestock. This remains a pressing issue. I have been in touch with parish and police jury presidents across South Louisiana to discuss their urgent requests for a centralized, holistic approach to spraying.

Following Hurricane Laura, my office organized an effort to secure a United States Air Force (USAF) C-130 aircraft to provide supplemental spraying in South Louisiana. While the Air Force was prepared to fly those missions, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)-USAF mosquito abatement program was not utilized. State and local government officials, chose instead, to use a decentralized spraying plan at the parish level. Unfortunately, this resulted in gaps along parish lines which caused livestock losses across the region and resulted in severely depleted mosquito abatement budgets at the parish level. As of this date, I am not aware of any parish receiving notification of reimbursement by the State.

Due to lessons learned in the aftermath of Hurricane Laura, I have begun reaching out to federal stakeholders to secure these assets in an effort to expedite mosquito abatement efforts. I am again offering to you my office's assistance to secure USDA/Air Force services to spray the impacted areas. I look forward to working with your administration to restore and rebuild the regions of our great state that were impacted by Hurricanes Laura and Delta.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Clay Higgins".

Clay Higgins
Member of Congress