

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515-1806**

September 5, 2021

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.  
President of the United States  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Biden:

Thank you for your visit to Louisiana to see firsthand the damage that Hurricane Ida brought to communities across the state and the greater Gulf Coast region. One of the items that you noticed and that we discussed in detail was the fuel supply shortages in hurricane-impacted areas. Without adequate supplies of gasoline to power generators until the grid is restored and to fuel vehicles to move people and critical supplies, the ability of Louisiana's communities to recover will be severely hampered.

While emergency workers and linemen work to restore power to Louisiana's impacted communities, gasoline-powered generators are being used to run critical infrastructure like medical special needs shelters, nursing homes, and hospitals. For these facilities, and for folks at home, generators provide a critical supply of power to oxygen machines and ventilators, keep the medically vulnerable cool during the intense summer heat, refrigerate insulin and other cold storage medications, and address other important health care needs. The Emergency Operations Centers are using generators to power their equipment and organize disaster response and recovery, and many pumping stations are relying on temporary power supplies to keep sewage out of people's homes. Fuel is further needed for search and rescues, wellness checks, medical transports, supply drops, and even to power chain saws and other equipment used to clear debris from roads.

Last week, I requested that your administration take critical steps to address this devastating fuel shortage. The Department of Energy's decision to release 1.8 million barrels of crude oil from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve is an important step in the right direction. However, the gasoline supply shortages in Louisiana are so dire that more direct action is required, as the need is so great that fuel supplies are consumed as soon as they become available. Louisiana has helped support this nation's energy needs for decades – and now is Louisiana's time of need.

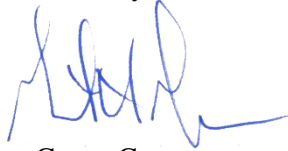
One potential solution would be to bring in hundreds of loaded fuel trucks from outside of Louisiana into the state to help meet the rising surge fuel needs. These trucks could make multiple deliveries, including refueling stops at operating refineries, before emptying their holds one last time in Louisiana and making their way back to their point of origin. As power is restored to service stations across Louisiana's southern parishes, this surge of gasoline supply will enable them to provide impacted communities with enough fuel to keep the recovery process moving forward.

Another helpful intervention would be to instruct the Environmental Protection Agency to provide refiners with temporary relief from the Renewable Identification Number required by the Renewable Fuel Standard. This would incentivize keeping all conventional fuels inside the United States at a time when they are badly needed by domestic consumers. Let me be clear: this would be a temporary waiver, limited in time and scope, that would only take effect for the duration of this critical fuel supply shortage.

Unless your administration intervenes, disaster victims in Louisiana will continue waiting in hours-long lines for a chance to purchase fuel at one of the few operating gas stations. By some estimates, two-thirds of gas stations in Louisiana have been without fuel since Hurricane Ida crippled oil and natural gas production in the Gulf of Mexico. With no concrete timeline for these offshore refineries to come back online, and with surges of evacuated families looking to return home, the gasoline shortage will only grow. A surge of supply is badly needed to kickstart the recovery process.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent request. I look forward to working with you to help address Louisiana's critical fuel supply shortfalls.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Garret Graves', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Garret Graves  
Member of Congress