

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Biden Administration Announces Grant Funds to Repair U.S. Virgin Islands Community Facilities Damaged by Natural Disasters

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In the wake of the water shortage and the health impacts brought about by the unprecedented sargassum seagrass influx in 2022, the Biden administration and the U.S. Department of Agriculture have announced the availability of grants aimed at repairing essential community facilities in the U.S. Virgin Islands and other affected rural areas.

Under the stewardship of USDA Rural Development State Director for Florida and the U.S. Virgin Islands, Lakeisha Hood Moise, up to \$50 million in grants are being made available through the Community Facilities Disaster Repair Grants Program. The grants

will benefit eligible rural areas and presidentially declared disaster areas across various states and territories.

“The Biden-Harris Administration and USDA stand ready to deploy every resource we have available to help families and individuals rebuild their lives and their communities,” Hood Moise stated. The intent is to make rural infrastructure, including vital community facilities, more resilient in the face of increasingly severe natural disasters such as floods, wildfires, and hurricanes.

Eligible entities for the grant include public bodies, federally recognized Indian Tribes, and community-based nonprofits. They may apply to receive up to 75% of total project costs to help repair community facilities damaged by natural disasters in 2022. The funds may be used to repair essential community facilities, replace damaged equipment or vehicles, and purchase new equipment for repairs.

The grant is part of the supplemental disaster funding under the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023. Applications for Community Facilities Disaster Repair Grants will be accepted on a continual basis until all funds are exhausted. There is no minimum or maximum grant limit per project.

This initiative is part of Mr. Biden's Investing in America Agenda, aimed at expanding economic opportunities, creating jobs, and improving the quality of life for millions of Americans in rural areas.

For more information on how to apply, interested parties can visit <https://www.rd.usda.gov/fl-vi> or contact the Rural Development State Office.

Under the Biden administration, USDA says it aims to transform America's food system, promote competition and fairer markets for all producers, ensure access to safe and nutritious food in all communities, and commit to equity across the Department by removing systemic barriers. To learn more about the USDA's ongoing projects, visit www.usda.gov.