



HENRY MCMASTER
GOVERNOR

March 20, 2024

Mr. Kem Fleming, Director
Office of Disaster Assistance
Field Operations Center East
U.S. Small Business Administration
101 Marietta Street NW, Suite 700
Atlanta, Georgia 30303-2725

Dear Mr. Fleming:

On January 9, 2024, a tornado caused severe damage to homes and businesses in Bamberg County. This tornado—which the National Weather Service has confirmed was an EF-2 tornado with 125 mph winds—produced significant structural damage to multiple businesses, historic buildings, public infrastructure, and more than 50 homes. The tornado also directly impacted an area that has been the focus of a strategic economic development initiative in recent years, dealing a disheartening blow to this small community, which had anticipated that its redevelopment efforts would generate additional tax revenue.

A Small Business Administration (SBA) Preliminary Damage Assessment was conducted on January 24–25, 2024, and based on the results of the survey, I certify that there are at least 25 homes and businesses in Bamberg County that sustained a minimum of 40% uninsured loss. Accordingly, I respectfully request that the SBA declare Bamberg County a disaster area and implement the SBA's Disaster Loan Program. South Carolina has confirmed that it will not receive Individual Assistance (IA) for this event through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

Thank you in advance for your favorable consideration of this request and your continued assistance with this matter. Should you have any questions or need any additional information, please contact Director Kim Stenson of the South Carolina Emergency Management Division at 803-737-8500.

Yours very truly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Henry McMaster".

Henry McMaster

Enclosure:

SBA Survey Recap, Bamberg County, January 24–25, 2024