



TEXAS GENERAL LAND OFFICE
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PRESS RELEASE

Commissioner Buckingham Praises Progress with Disaster Recovery and Mitigation Funding, Raises Awareness of Unfounded Attempts by HUD to Destabilize Vital Funding

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Austin — Land Commissioner Dawn Buckingham, M.D. recently praised progress with mitigation and disaster recovery funding being administered from the Texas General Land Office (GLO). Currently, more than [\\$128 million regional mitigation projects](#) have been approved for various vulnerable communities across the state. Commissioner Buckingham's stated goal for the GLO is to "serve those we are supposed to serve and do it well" and, since taking office in January, Buckingham's focus on resetting recovery efforts has resulted in the City of Houston and Harris County meeting their benchmarks for the first time since Hurricane Harvey and better serving their residents. Harris County also recently [approved plans](#) for more than \$1 billion from the GLO in mitigation and infrastructure projects.

Buckingham has been crisscrossing the state bringing much needed flood mitigation resources to vulnerable communities across Texas. However, she also has been raising awareness among local leaders of persistent, unfounded attempts by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to destabilize the distribution of vital Community Development Block Grant Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) funding already allocated to their communities. HUD recently issued multiple administrative subpoenas requesting depositions of Commissioner Buckingham and various GLO employees regarding the Harvey mitigation competition funding allocated according to a plan HUD approved years ago.

"As the statewide elected official tasked with overseeing the efficient and effective administration of billions of dollars in disaster recovery and mitigation funding, I am disappointed that our federal partners are attempting to slow this progress by politicizing funding," said Commissioner Buckingham. "The GLO is confident in these mitigation project awards, and I will continue to fight to protect funding for these important projects".

Before Commissioner Buckingham arrived at the GLO, the current flood mitigation allocations were determined by engaging local councils of governments in a HUD-directed process to determine the best use of these rare and precious dollars. In 2019, the GLO worked hand-in-hand with HUD to develop the state's action plan for mitigation funding. HUD approved the plan – twice, and the GLO executed on the plan approved by HUD.

Despite HUD's approval, a Biden political appointee made baseless claims of discrimination, which were disproved as entirely false by the facts that more than two-thirds of beneficiaries of the competition funds were Black and Hispanic and 100 percent of the mitigation projects benefit majority low- and moderate-income communities, as mandated by HUD. Despite proof to the contrary, two years after approving the same GLO plan, HUD referred their discrimination claims to the Department of Justice (DOJ), which sent the referral back to HUD in less than 48 hours.

In response to this rejection by the DOJ, HUD recently issued administrative subpoenas for Commissioner Buckingham and several staff members regarding the Harvey mitigation competition funding that was allocated according to the plan HUD approved years ago. Last month, the GLO filed a motion to quash reiterating the evidence against the politically motivated false claims. Commissioner Buckingham previously sought a meeting with HUD Secretary Marsha Fudge to discuss the false accusations, but the request was met with a categorical denial with no expectation to meet in the future.

While development of the plan and HUD's false accusations predate Commissioner Buckingham's election to lead the GLO, she remains committed to the HUD-approved plan and respecting the local officials who participated in the HUD-directed process. Through political games, HUD is threatening to take the resources away from communities that have sought flood mitigation funding for decades, but Commissioner Buckingham remains steadfast in defending communities across the state.

"HUD's politicizing of mitigation funding is unfair to local communities, and their unreasonable and unduly burdensome use of administrative subpoena power will slowdown critical funding to our disaster-prone communities and will be particularly devastating to Texas homes, businesses, and infrastructure," said Commissioner Buckingham. "I call on these communities to make your voices heard to those in Washington and let them know how this much needed funding will benefit those they were sent to serve."

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