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PRESS RELEASE

Cmr. George P. Bush sends letter to OMB calling for rule approval for mitigation funding

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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AUSTIN — On Wednesday, January 2, 2019, Texas Land Commissioner George P. Bush sent a letter to Director Mick Mulvaney calling for Office of Management & Budget (OMB) approval of rules for \$4.383 billion in mitigation funding appropriated to Texas by Congress in February of 2018. These funds were allocated to fund mitigation projects to protect communities against future storms through the Community Development Block Grants for Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) program.

"Hurricane Harvey devastated Texas in August of 2017, more than 16 months ago. Thousands of Texans are still putting their lives back together. Despite the hard work that has been done to put families back in their homes, a great deal of work remains for them and our damaged infrastructure.

Since the funds were first allocated, the Texas General Land Office (GLO) and Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) have worked together to better define the meaning of mitigation. The GLO provided information to HUD on what type of mitigation projects would best serve those impacted by Hurricane Harvey. This collaboration was done in part to help expedite publication of the rules governing these funds in the Federal Register. Unfortunately, approval of these rules for publication by HUD in the Federal Register - the next required step before the GLO can begin drafting the federally required State Action Plan for the funds - has been considerably delayed.

"I am writing to ask you to please approve these rules for publication as soon as possible so we can get started on construction of vital infrastructure projects to protect Texans from the type of damage caused by Hurricane Harvey," said Commissioner Bush. "We need to get started as quickly as possible if we are to begin before the 2019 hurricane season, which will begin in just six months. We cannot afford to wait any longer. We must be bold in our efforts to recover responsibly. Innovation, preparedness, and mitigation are the best remedies to address the threats posed by natural disasters."

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