Burgum requests major presidential disaster declaration for response to COVID-19 pandemic

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* NOTE FOR MEDIA: There will not be press briefing Sunday, March 29. Briefings will resume at 4 p.m. Monday, March 30.

BISMARCK, N.D. – Gov. Doug Burgum has requested a major presidential disaster declaration to unlock federal assistance to support North Dakota's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The governor's request seeks assistance for public infrastructure and facilities; mitigation grants for counties and tribal nations; assistance for individuals and households; and supplemental nutrition and transitional sheltering assistance, among other aid.

"Federal assistance is critical for our capability to expand North Dakota's response to the rapidly evolving impacts of COVID-19," Burgum stated in the request. He noted the pandemic comes as North Dakota is still recovering from three major weather-related disasters that caused extensive losses for agricultural producers and widespread infrastructure damage.

Burgum declared a state of emergency on March 13 and activated the state's Unified Command to coordinate a whole-of-government and whole-of-community approach to the COVID-19 response. He has since signed more than a dozen executive orders aimed at combating the spread of the novel coronavirus and providing relief to North Dakota citizens, employees and employers, health care workers, first responders and others.

Still, "the COVID-19 pandemic response is of such severity and magnitude that effective response and recovery is beyond the capabilities of the State and affected local governments," Burgum stated in the request for federal assistance.

The request can be viewed here. For more information on the state's COVID-19 response, visit www.health.nd.gov/coronavirus or www.ndresponse.gov.

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