

Corporate Citizenship Center Responds to Iowa Disaster

For Iowans—both those who live in the state and those like me who grew up there—the second week of August represents a time to come together at the Iowa State Fair to celebrate the best in agriculture, industry, entertainment, and achievement.

Instead, this year Iowans are coming together to clear debris, salvage homes and businesses, and figure out how to recover from a rare derecho that ravaged the state with 112 mph force winds and rain.

A federal disaster declaration has been approved for the state along with the request of nearly \$4 billion in disaster relief aid from the Federal Emergency Management Agency. The National Guard has activated and a number of nonprofits are on the ground.

Why it matters: The needs are going to be greater than the resources currently available can support, and the economic impact of the 37 million acres of farmland that were flattened are yet to be realized. Challenges from the storm continue to exist across the state, including power outages, debris removal, ensuring shelter for disaster victims, as well as access to food and water for those displaced.

How you can help: The business community is providing support, including assistance from local establishments like [Willie Ray's Q Shack](#) that has become a local hero; [Sukup Manufacturing](#), in partnership with [IowaLove.org](#) and the Carson King Foundation; and in-kind donations and monetary donations from corporations like UPS, Wells Fargo, and Hy-Vee. Here are more [national and local organizations to consider](#).

Iowans have proved their resilience time and time again through flooding and tornado events often seen in the Midwest and will continue to be resilient following this derecho. Few, however, would have ever expected to also be recovering from a hurricane-like storm in a landlocked state. Support is needed now to help with the recovery, but we must also look to the future in preparing for unexpected extreme weather events.

ICYMI: Last week, the Chamber Foundation hosted a Lebanon coordination call for companies and individuals that are looking to support the humanitarian relief efforts resulting from the deadly explosion in the Port of Beirut. On the call, we heard from partners who are actively responding and learned what the immediate needs are in the area, as well as the long-term outlook for recovery. [Watch the recording](#).

—Brooks Nelson, Senior Director, Global Resilience, U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation Corporate Citizenship Center