

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 14, 2025

Mr. Cameron Hamilton
Senior Official Performing the Duties of FEMA Administrator
Federal Emergency Management Agency
500 C Street SW
Washington, D.C. 20024

Dear Mr. Hamilton,

We write with serious concern about reports that Elon Musk’s “Department of Government Efficiency” (DOGE) has obtained access to sensitive information at the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), including the personal data of thousands of disaster victims.¹

The United States has suffered from a growing number of natural disasters over the past several years—from severe flooding in Vermont, Minnesota, and Connecticut and hurricanes in North Carolina, to catastrophic wildfires in Hawai’i, California, New Mexico, and Oregon. In order to register for federal disaster assistance and receive help rebuilding their communities, our constituents have provided their personally identifiable information to FEMA. They did not do so with the expectation that their sensitive information would be turned over to unvetted, unaccountable DOGE agents.

Mr. Musk has stated his desire to eliminate waste at FEMA.² We agree the country must examine and thoughtfully consider reforms to the operation of FEMA. Our constituents have experienced first-hand the frustrating bureaucracies that hinder the federal disaster recovery process. Congress must take steps to equip FEMA and communities with the tools needed to better assist disaster victims after the storm has passed. We stand ready to work with anyone willing to fix it.

But such reforms do not require, or come close to justifying, the invasive measures DOGE has reportedly undertaken.

When disaster strikes, Americans should have confidence the government will safeguard their data, regardless of the Administration at the helm. Reports indicate you have breached that trust—perhaps in violation of federal privacy law.³

To understand the scope of that breach and the extent of your compliance with federal law, we request responses to the following items by no later than February 28, 2025:


¹ *Elon Musk’s Agents Have Gained Access to FEMA’s Sensitive Disaster Data*, Washington Post (Feb. 7, 2025) (online at <https://www.washingtonpost.com/climate-environment/2025/02/07/musk-trump-fema-doge/>).

² *Noem Defends Musk’s Access to Personal Data*, The Hill (February 9, 2025) (<https://thehill.com/homenews/administration/5134780-elon-musk-access-dhs/>).

³ 5 U.S.C. § 552a.

1. Please provide a complete list of individuals authorized by FEMA to access disaster victims' data and records during the period between January 20, 2025, and February 14, 2025. Please indicate whether those individuals are employees of FEMA, the White House, DOGE, or another federal agency and specify the agency. If the individuals are not federal employees, please indicate that in your response.
2. What are the individuals specified above authorized to do with disaster victims' data and records, and what types of data were obtained?
3. What procedures does FEMA follow to protect disaster victims' data from misuse? Are DOGE-affiliated individuals required to follow those procedures?
4. How many Americans' personally identifiable data has been accessed by DOGE-affiliated individuals? What vetting did these individuals undergo prior to their being granted access to FEMA systems?

Sincerely,



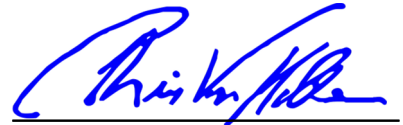
Peter Welch
United States Senator



Alex Padilla
United States Senator



Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator



Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



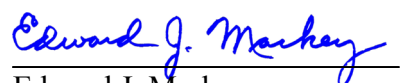
Adam B. Schiff
United States Senator



Martin Heinrich
United States Senator



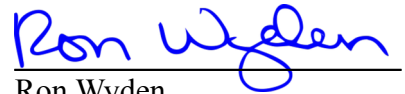
Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



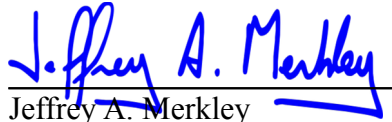
Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



Bernard Sanders
United States Senator



Ron Wyden
United States Senator



Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator



Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator