



MIKE DEWINE
GOVERNOR OF OHIO



October 7, 2024

Edward Fears
Director
U.S. Small Business Administration
Office of Disaster Assistance
Field Operations Center East
101 Marietta Street NW, Suite 700
Atlanta, GA 30303-2725

Dear Director Fears,

Under provisions of Title 13 C.F.R. Part 123.3, I respectfully request that the Administrator of the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) implement a Small Business Administration declaration to provide assistance in the form of SBA Economic Injury Disaster Loans for Mahoning County as a result of the explosion on May 28, 2024, at the Realty Building on East Federal Street in downtown Youngstown.

The building explosion in Youngtown Ohio caused significant economic injury to its neighboring downtown businesses. Several restaurants depend heavily on foot traffic, offering breakfast and lunch services for downtown offices such as the United States Postal Service, the Eastern Gateway Community College, the Mahoning County Auditor's Office, and the Youngtown Municipal Court. All the surveyed businesses have either had to dismiss employees or reduce employees' hours.

A survey of these affected businesses was conducted to determine the economic impact of their losses for the disaster period as compared to the same period in the preceding year. Based upon these surveys, I certify that at least five small businesses in the disaster area have suffered substantial economic injury as a result of the disaster and are in need of financial assistance not otherwise available on reasonable terms.

The State of Ohio is engaged in multiple response and recovery efforts including four significant severe storm and tornado events and assisting first responders with public safety issues in Springfield, Ohio. Additionally, the demolition of the building that experienced the explosion was ongoing through September 25, 2024, severely limiting access to parking and pedestrian walkways. The restricted access caused economic injury to the neighboring businesses which then needed to be documented and provided to Ohio Emergency Management Agency to be included with this request. Although this request is beyond the timeframe stated in 13 C.F.R. Part 123.3, I respectfully request that the SBA Economic Injury Disaster Loan program be made available to assist the impacted businesses.

If you need additional information, please contact Sima S. Merick, Executive Director, Ohio Emergency Management Agency at 614-799-3674 or smerick@dps.ohio.gov.

Very respectfully yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mike DeWine".

Mike DeWine
Governor