

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

January 24, 2019

The Honorable Emily W. Murphy
Administrator
United States General Services Administration
1800 F Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20405

Dear Administrator Murphy:

We write to you today regarding the Alton Lennon Federal Building in Wilmington, North Carolina. As you are likely aware, the Alton Lennon Federal Building was severely damaged during Hurricane Florence and has been closed for the foreseeable future. We urge you to secure temporary, leasable space in Wilmington for displaced federal employees and to restore and reopen the Alton Lennon Federal Building as soon as possible.

To date, more than forty-four federal employees have been displaced because of the building's closure, including a federal magistrate judge who holds court in Wilmington. These federal employees provide crucial services to the people of Wilmington and the surrounding counties. We are specifically concerned about the closure of the federal courtroom in Wilmington. A courtroom in Wilmington is critical because many of our constituents are unable to travel significant distances to other courtrooms.

Currently, the federal court has a temporary lease agreement and access to space in the New Hanover County Courthouse. This agreement is set to end in April 2019. Our understanding is that the General Services Administration and New Hanover County have not been able to agree to an extension of the lease and that you will be unable to renovate and reopen the Alton Lennon Federal Building by the lease's expiration. If our understanding is accurate, then it appears the federal district court will be unable to hold court in Wilmington after April 1, 2019, unless it is possible to have a temporary presence in the Alton Lennon Federal Building, as we understand was one option, or another space is procured.

We are deeply concerned about the possibility of the federal district being unable to hold court in Wilmington. Accordingly, we ask that you continue to work to ensure the court may administer justice in New Hanover County. We also ask that you work to expeditiously renovate and reopen the Alton Lennon Federal Building. Thank you in advance for your attention to this very important matter to us and our constituents. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact either Brad Watts with Senator Tillis at 202-224-6342 or Ann Woods Hawks with Senator Burr at 202-224-3154.

Sincerely,



Richard Burr
United States Senator



Thom Tillis
United States Senator