



July 10, 2013

The Honorable Barack Obama
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

RE: June – July Storms Event Disaster Declaration
Consideration for Federal Disaster Assistance Funding and Appeal to the
Federal Emergency Agency for A Major Federal Disaster Declaration

Dear Mr. President:

As you are aware, 15 counties in Upstate New York were severely impacted by a series of storms between June 27 and July 3, 2013, which resulted in widespread damage to homes, businesses, and public infrastructure.

Governor Cuomo issued a declaration of a State Disaster Emergency on June 28, 2013, for this event and requested a Federal major disaster declaration in order to assist the affected local jurisdictions in their recovery efforts, which have already been estimated to easily pass the \$26.7 million dollar per capita damage threshold in the affected counties.

Despite the enormity of the damage statewide, we received notification that Governor Cuomo's request for a Federal major disaster declaration in order to assist the affected local jurisdictions in their recovery efforts is potentially to be denied.

On behalf of the 15 counties, we again request that an additional assessment and a thorough deliberation of the Governor's application be done before a final decision is made official. We believe this to be an appropriate request regarding relief funds as we incurred an exceptionally large amount of road and infrastructure damage.

We would question any denial by FEMA after such a natural disaster declaration. The storm impulses during the identified period that enveloped other parts of the state were severe, continuous, required mutual aid response, and resulted in widespread damage to homes, businesses and infrastructure. The estimated costs to repair damaged

infrastructure as a result of these storms are well beyond the ability to fund utilizing existing revenue streams for annual road maintenance.

Without FEMA funding, it is extremely unlikely that the State will be able to restore the largest, most costly repairs to our damaged infrastructure in a timely manner.

We feel that the State of New York has met FEMA's criteria. The storm caused widespread damage in all areas of the fifteen counties. Mutual aid was provided by at least a half dozen State Agencies and assistance was also given from municipal governments which crossed jurisdictional boundaries to provide supporting services.

If a FEMA decision is negative, we then request that other federal resources be examined to help the afflicted areas of this fifteen county region of Upstate New York. While we understand that the nation has had to endure a series of natural disasters during 2013, whether it's the Oklahoma tornadoes or wildfires in the West, we feel that this conversation isn't about offsetting federal relief funds with cuts to government waste, or bureaucrats putting being put ahead of disaster victims and abdicate their responsibility to pay for desperately needed aid.

Fortunately, there are plenty of opportunities for the federal government to save money in order to pay for the assistance our neighbors need in the wake of natural disasters.

There are highly-publicized episodes such as the IRS spending \$49 million at more than 200 conferences between 2010-12; or of the reported military aid delivery of F-16 fighter jets to the nation of Egypt. It's difficult to tell U.S. residents that federal aid is unavailable to them when they see publicized reports of questionable spending such as these illustrations.

We believe that the extensive damage to roads provides justification and the need for FEMA funding to aid in repairing our vital public infrastructure. We request your reconsideration for Governor Andrew Cuomo's recommendation for a Federal major disaster declaration for New York State.

Sincerely,



Senator James L. Seward
51st Senate District



Senator Joseph A. Griffo
47th Senate District



Senator Hugh T. Farley
49th Senate District



Senator David J. Valesky
53rd Senate District

cc: FEMA Administrator W. Craig Fugate
FEMA Region II Regional Administrator Maryann Tierney
U.S. Senator Charles Schumer
U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand
Governor Andrew Cuomo
U.S. Rep. Richard Hanna
U.S. Rep. Bill Owens
U.S. Rep. Chris Gibson