



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James L. Seward

Seward Appeals To Governor For Additional Disaster Relief

James L. Seward

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ONEONTA, 08/29/11 – State Senator James L. Seward (R/C/I-Oneonta) today called on Governor Cuomo to support legislation for New York State to cover local expenses to repair public infrastructure damaged by Hurricane Irene.

“At a time when local government officials are already working on the thinnest of margins, adding the repair costs associated with Hurricane Irene could be devastating for many small, rural municipalities,” said Senator Seward. **“The state’s emergency response to Hurricane Irene has been professional and swift, now long-term financial assistance is needed to help communities rebuild.”**

Senator Seward says damage estimates that are sure to be in the tens of millions of dollars will overwhelm small local governments. He says the state needs to intervene, as it has in the past, and absorb the local share of infrastructure repair costs.

Senator Seward’s [letter to Governor Cuomo](#) states:

“I write to request that New York State pick up the local share of flood expenses. Historically, the federal government’s 75 percent share has been completed by a 12.5 percent match by each of the state and local governments. In 2006, the legislature and Governor Pataki enacted legislation authorizing the state to fund the local share.”

“The cost of county town and village road, bridge and other municipal infrastructure repairs will exceed the localities’ capacity to fund their share.”

“Local government leaders are diligently preparing their budgets for the upcoming year and are doing their best to maintain vital services while keeping property taxes in check. Costs to rebuild following Hurricane Irene will push many municipalities to the brink - they cannot afford the unexpected expense. Additional state support is essential to prevent financial ruin on top of the already devastating physical impacts of the storm,” Seward concluded.

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[The complete letter to Governor Cuomo is attached.](#)