

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

August 27, 2008

The Honorable George W. Bush
President of the United States
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President,

We are writing to call your attention to the August 25, 2008 request by the State of Vermont for disaster assistance in the wake of unprecedented rain and storm damage from a persistent, damaging weather system occurring between July 21 and August 12. Thank you for your responsiveness to our earlier request for assistance for the event of July 18.

Severe thunderstorms with high wind and heavy rainfall continued throughout the three week period across the state and New England. The ground over the northern and central parts of the state was completely saturated and unable to absorb record amounts of rain which continued to fall. Rivers flooded their banks and damaged public and private roads throughout the state. An EF-1 tornado was confirmed by the National Weather Service during this time period in Vermont, and two lives were lost due to storms.

The impact of these events has been particularly hard on Vermont towns. Many of our towns are dealing with road washouts, downed trees that restrict emergency access and power outages. Storms came in waves and communities were unable to repair damaged infrastructure before the next storm caused additional damage. Most severely impacted are state and town roads that have been blocked by debris and water from these extreme weather events. Preliminary damage estimates exceed \$1.66 million. Every county has suffered the impact of flooding and wind damage, with particularly high damage in the counties of Addison, Caledonia, Essex, Lamoille, Orange, Washington and Windsor.

FEMA resources are critical to help Vermont and its towns respond to this disaster. According to preliminary estimates, the amount of damage caused by this storm system exceeds the threshold for Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act eligibility.

We urgently request your support of a Presidential Disaster Declaration for the state of Vermont for the July 21 through August 12 storm event. Thank you.

Sincerely,



PATRICK LEAHY
United State Senator



BERNARD SANDERS
United States Senator



PETER WELCH
United States Representative