

April 12, 2011

The Honorable Barack Obama
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama:

We write in strong support of the State of Connecticut's appeal for federal assistance for Middlesex and Windham Counties and its request for reimbursement of emergency protective measures, such as roof clearances and inspections, for the January 11-12, 2011 devastating snowstorm that impacted the entire State of Connecticut.

Since the State of Connecticut submitted its original request for assistance, the National Weather Service (NWS), the federal agency designated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to provide government snowfall data, has provided snowfall mapping and analysis for Middlesex and Windham Counties that was not previously available. According to the new information, it appears that more than 28 inches may have fallen in the northwest part of Middlesex County and that 23-24 inches likely fell in the northwest corner of Windham County. This new snowfall data for Middlesex and Windham Counties meets or exceeds record or near-record snowfall as required to provide assistance under FEMA's snow policy.

The costs of the January 11-12, 2011 storm on Middlesex and Windham Counties were extremely high. Both counties have validated expenses that are more than double FEMA's per capita damage requirements and are higher than any of the six other counties in Connecticut that have already received assistance for this snowstorm. In addition, both counties are still recovering from flooding last spring, which was severe enough to warrant federal assistance. Finally, Windham County is an economically depressed area with an unemployment and poverty rate higher than the rest of the state and a median household income well below the state average.

We are also supportive of Connecticut's request for reimbursement for emergency protective measures, such as roof clearances and inspections, outside of the time period currently allowed. Due to the heavy snowfall, municipal governments and the State of Connecticut conducted unprecedented roof inspections and roof clearances in order to prevent injuries and property damage. The costs incurred by the state and local governments to undertake this crucial work were significant – the Department of Transportation estimates its costs for such activities was \$750,000 and some municipalities estimate costs as high as \$33,000. These prudent actions surely protected lives and reduced property damages.

Connecticut is suffering from a severe economic downturn – a situation only made worse by this snowstorm. We ask that you carefully consider the information in the State of Connecticut’s appeal and urge you to provide the assistance requested. Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

Joseph I. Lieberman
United States Senator

Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator

John B. Larson
Member of Congress

Rosa DeLauro
Member of Congress

Christopher S. Murphy
Member of Congress

Joe Courtney
Member of Congress

Jim Himes
Member of Congress