

Braley Announces House Emergency Supplemental Funding bill to include \$2.65 billion flood relief pkg

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The announcement comes after the members of the Iowa delegation sent a letter to House leaders on Tuesday June 17th urging them to swiftly work to put together an emergency flood relief package due to the widespread and unprecedented impact the Flood of 2008 is having on people, property, and agriculture.

Rep. David Obey (WI-08), chairman of the House Appropriations Committee, said, "On Friday I was contacted by several members whose districts were hit with floods," said Obey. "Working with those members, we have added significant funding to the supplemental to ensure that federal agencies have the necessary resources to meet the needs of impacted communities."

Congressman Bruce Braley (IA-01) said, "The floods of 2008 have affected nearly everyone in Iowa. The scope of the damage to Iowans' homes, lives, property, crops and livelihoods almost defies description. This unprecedented disaster demands special action to help the people of Iowa rebuild. When things get tough in Iowa, Iowans come together and help one another. I'm proud that Iowa's congressional delegation is working together to help Iowans overwhelmed by the flood."

The \$2.65 billion flood relief package will be included as a part of emergency supplemental funding legislation to pay for ongoing American military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. The House will consider this legislation today.

The breakdown of funding in the emergency supplemental for flood disaster relief is as follows:

Federal Agency/Program

Funding Amount in Supplemental

FEMA Disaster Relief Account

\$1,297,000,000

Army Corps of Engineers

\$606,000,000

SBA - Disaster Loans

\$267,000,000

Agriculture Assistance

\$480,000,000

TOTAL

\$2,650,000,000

The text of the letter is below.

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June 17, 2008

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi

The Honorable John Boehner

Office of the Speaker

Office of the Minority Leader

H-232, US Capitol

H-204, US Capitol

Washington, DC 20515

Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi, and Minority Leader Boehner:

We are writing to request that you begin immediate discussions with the Appropriations Committee leadership on the

subject of broad-scope, disaster funding related to the Midwest floods. We believe that this funding, at the outset, must include resources in the Supplemental Appropriations bill that will soon be taken up in the House.

In Iowa, Governor Culver has issued an Emergency Proclamation for 83 of Iowa's 99 counties, all experiencing significant damage due to the combination of severe rainfall, winds, and flooding. In addition, 29 counties have been declared Presidential Disaster Areas in Iowa, and the flooding has not yet stopped.

The extent of damage to Iowa, and to the other Midwestern States is currently unknown. However, Governor Culver has provided some initial examples of the impact. We have met or exceeded record flooding levels in many areas of the state. These records have surpassed the marks set by the 1993 flooding, which resulted in billions of dollars of damage. The total flooding impacts have not yet reached all areas of the State. In some areas, such as the Cedar and Iowa rivers, which have experienced "500-year" floods, stages are expected to continue for another week, if not longer.

Sadly, 17 citizens have lost their lives, and many more have been injured. Over 38,000 Iowans have been displaced from thousands of homes and countless more have seen their lives disrupted through the closure or evacuation of hospitals, nursing homes, businesses, and schools. More than 18 shelters have been in operation in more than a dozen counties.

Damages to these communities include loss of power, water and waste water treatment, emergency communications, sanitary and storm sewer destruction and serious damages to public infrastructure including miles of roadway, bridges, culverts, and governmental buildings. Untold businesses have also been damaged, both large and small. Downtown areas in Des Moines, Cedar Falls, Waterloo, Cedar Rapids, Iowa City and Coralville and numerous other small communities have been devastated, resulting in physical and economic ruin.

Unfortunately, it is likely that these statistics will worsen for both Iowa and the other affected Midwestern States as the flood continues. President Bush will be visiting Iowa on Thursday, and it is our understanding that he has instructed OMB Director Nussle to work with Congress on providing disaster funding in the Supplemental. We ask that you focus your discussions with the Appropriations Committee on disaster funding authority that is immediately available, and that follow-on discussions include all assistance resources available to the Federal government, including, but not limited to, disaster assistance, economic development assistance, rural development assistance, and Army Corps of Engineers funding.

Thank you in advance for your prompt attention to this matter. We look forward to working with you in the future as we begin to calculate the extent of the damages in our State.

Sincerely,

Dave Loeb sack

Member of Congress

Tom Latham

Member of Congress

Leonard Boswell

Member of Congress

Steve King

Member of Congress

Bruce Braley

Member of Congress

Cc: The Honorable David Obey, Chairman, House Committee on Appropriations, The Honorable Jerry Lewis, Ranking Member, House Committee on Appropriations