

Iowa Delegation Asks Bush for a Commitment to Helping Flood Victims

Today, Iowa's Congressional Delegation asked President George W. Bush for his immediate action in requesting adequate funds to help Iowans and other Midwesterners recover and rebuild. Since President Bush's visit to Iowa on Thursday, June 19, 2008 to review damages caused by flooding, tornados, and other severe weather, the Administration has taken limited action in securing additional federal disaster aid for the communities, residents, and businesses affected by the floods.

Washington, DC - Today, Iowa's Congressional Delegation asked President George W. Bush for his immediate action in requesting adequate funds to help Iowans and other Midwesterners recover and rebuild. Since President Bush's visit to Iowa on Thursday, June 19, 2008 to review damages caused by flooding, tornados, and other severe weather, the Administration has taken limited action in securing additional federal disaster aid for the communities, residents, and businesses affected by the floods.

"I urge President Bush to support the needs of Iowans impacted by the unprecedented flooding by submitting a formal request for additional disaster relief funding," Congressman Braley said. "Iowa's families, businesses and communities need additional federal assistance as soon as possible. I hope the Administration will act quickly to request and distribute additional funding to Iowans."

"A Presidential call to action is critical in Iowa's pursuit of additional disaster assistance," said Congressman Loebsack. "I traveled with President Bush to Iowa, and stood next to him as he reviewed the overwhelming extent of damage caused to our communities by the devastating floods and tornados. At that time, and still today, I appreciate the President's interest in Iowa's plight, but additional action by the administration is necessary to help the people struggling to get back on their feet, and the communities searching for the resources to rebuild."

"It is important that the Iowa delegation works together to make sure that the federal government meets its obligation to provide adequate assistance to flood victims in Iowa and throughout the Midwest," said Congressman Latham.

"It's been over two months since Congress appropriated federal dollars to help Iowa and other states clean-up, and yet, funding has yet to be released," said Boswell. "Folks back in Iowa are getting discouraged at the slow response by this administration. We need more than words. We need action."

"To ensure Iowans get the assistance from the federal government that we need to move forward with the rebuilding and recovery effort, we must see to it that all interested parties are on the same page. A formal request for aid from the President will hopefully complement the work already being done by the state government to assess the needs in Iowa and the effort being undertaken in Congress to finally put together a bill that will deliver to Iowa the resources we need to move forward and rebuild," said Congressman Steve King.

A formal Presidential request for disaster aid will not only clearly express the Administration's support for a swift Midwest recovery, it will help expedite the approval of a second disaster package currently being crafted by Congress. The \$2.65 billion already appropriated by Congress, is serving as a down payment on cleanup efforts, however billions more are needed if Iowa is to fully recover from this disaster and rebuild better and stronger than before.

Current needs estimates compiled by the Rebuild Iowa Advisory Commission include \$946 million in unmet housing cost for single family and multi-family housing; \$703 million in unmet needs for repair and rebuilding of public buildings and infrastructure; \$2.78 billion in unmet needs for damages to small and intermediate businesses. Moreover, it is estimated that Iowa has suffered between \$2.5 and \$3 billion in damages to agricultural crops, grain, and grain-handling infrastructure is estimated.

Please find a copy of the letter sent to President George W. Bush below.

September 5, 2008

The Honorable George W. Bush

President of the United States of America

The White House

1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW

Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Bush,

As you know, three months ago, the State of Iowa and nine other Midwestern states were severely affected by flooding, tornados, and severe weather. While we appreciate your visit to Iowa, since that time there has been no formal Presidential request for disaster assistance funding. We strongly urge your immediate action in requesting adequate funds to help Iowans and other Midwesterners recover and rebuild.

To date, the Governor of Iowa has issued emergency declarations for 86 of 99 Iowa Counties and you have declared 85 of those counties Major Disaster Areas. Many of these counties experienced flooding beyond the "500 year" floodplain with over 45,000 square miles, and 86 percent of Iowa's counties and land mass being affected by this disaster.

Damages to homes, businesses, farms, schools, and critical infrastructure are extensive. Much of the damage is outside of the area in which flood insurance is common and un-insured losses throughout all of Iowa require targeted and expedient federal assistance. The people of the Midwest deserve a commitment and promise of action. There is strong precedent for expedited action on supplemental appropriations and disaster tax benefits following a natural disaster of this magnitude and we trust you will agree additional funds are urgently needed for the Midwest.

Thank you in advance for your official request for disaster assistance funding for Iowa and other Midwestern flood-affected states. The road to recovery for our State will be long and difficult, but your continued support combined with the resiliency of our families will enable our communities to move forward, and thrive once again.

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