



STATE OF NEW JERSEY
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May 12, 2011

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

Through: Ms. Lynn Canton
Federal Emergency Management Agency
Region II Administrator
Department of Homeland Security

Dear Mr. President:

In accordance with 44 C.F.R. §206.46, I am appealing the April 19, 2011 denial of individual and public assistance contained in my letter of March 31, 2011 requesting a major disaster declaration as a result of flooding in New Jersey from March 10 through 17. In addition to my request for Bergen, Essex, Morris and Passaic counties, I am also requesting a declaration for Warren County based on additional information about damages.

During the winter and early spring an upper level trough along the east coast drove several moisture-laden winter storms into the region. This recurring pattern of heavy precipitation, combined with wet or frozen ground and melting snowpack, produced runoff resulting in near record flooding in parts of the State. The repetitive storms resulted in river levels that were already elevated when the March 10 storm began.

The Honorable Barack Obama
May 12, 2011
Page Two

New Jersey has been struck by multiple severe weather events during the past two years which have seriously impacted the State budget and impeded our ability to effectively respond to this and future events without Federal assistance. Currently, the State is in ongoing response to a federally declared severe winter storm (DR-1954) which occurred on December 26-27, 2010. Subsequent to that storm two others were of such severity that I declared States of Emergency.

On March 16, 2011 preliminary damage assessments ("PDA") were conducted by representatives of FEMA, New Jersey Office of Emergency Management, and county and local officials. The PDAs indicated that the most severely impacted counties of the State are Bergen, Essex, Morris, Passaic and Warren. The initial joint PDA determined that over 3,800 homes in these counties had been damaged; subsequently, it became evident that at least 4,159 homes were affected. Many of these homeowners were low income and their damaged houses were either uninsured or underinsured.

Passaic County incurred over \$4.5 million in Public Assistance costs. Originally, Passaic County was thought to be the only county to exceed its per capita threshold. Thereafter, additional information culled from the PDA revealed that Warren County also exceeded its per capita threshold by nearly \$100,000.

I remain convinced that this incident is of such severity and magnitude that effective response is beyond the capabilities of the State and the affected local governments, and that supplementary federal emergency assistance is necessary. Pursuant to 44 C.F.R. § 206.48 (a) (2), I respectfully request that you consider that the extraordinary concentration of damages warrants Federal assistance even if the Statewide per capita threshold is not met.

Sincerely



Chris Christie
Governor