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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

November 6, 2012

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DEAN, NEW JERSEY DELEGATION

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

Dear President Obama:

I am writing to respectfully request that you direct the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to extend the emergency public assistance cost share waiver for New Jersey and other areas impacted by Superstorm Sandy.

The sheer magnitude of the devastation on infrastructure and public facilities as well as the immense personal toll the storm has taken on our citizens is evident in every municipality up and down the Jersey Shore. First responders and volunteers are working around the clock providing assistance to impacted residents but the damage to these areas is extensive and many efforts have been hampered by the delay in power restoration. Local leaders are gravely concerned that the 10 day waiver is insufficient to meet the ongoing emergency needs of our communities.

Previous disaster response efforts, similar to those now occurring across New Jersey, have received necessary extensions of the waiver when events warranted—including Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, and Ike, as well as other instances of flooding and severe storms. This option is available, was previously used in similar situations, and is justified to provide local governments with all necessary and available tools to ensure the safety of their citizens.

In Monmouth and Ocean Counties, in particular, the towns are continuing necessary measures but are unfortunately forced to prepare for a possible Nor'easter, expected to impact New Jersey this week. Superstorm Sandy eroded flood defenses for these communities and many are now at risk of a further water breach. Potential strong winds could not only hamper current debris removal efforts but create additional hazards in areas that are still struggling to clean up on the existing timeline.

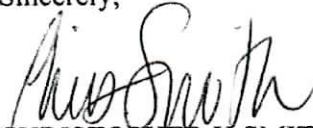
Accordingly, it appears that the approaching Nor'easter is likely to both prohibit local governments from taking advantage of the existing waiver, and to cause additional damage that will aggravate the impact of Superstorm Sandy.

Co-Chairman of: Task Force on Alzheimer's Disease • Bi-Partisan Coalition for Combating Anti-Semitism • Lyme Disease Caucus
Coalition for Autism Research and Education • Global Internet Freedom Caucus • Bi-Partisan Congressional Pro-Life Caucus
Spina Bifida Caucus • Vietnam Caucus • Poland Caucus • Bosnia Caucus
Ad Hoc Congressional Committee for Irish Affairs • Congressional Caucus on Human Trafficking

While the Nor'easter is highlighting the need for this immediate extension, with or without another storm, I believe that, at a minimum, a 60 day extension should be granted today to ensure that New Jersey can adequately respond to Superstorm Sandy.

I appreciate your attention to this important matter and look forward your timely response to the request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Smith", written in a cursive style.

CHRISTOPHER H SMITH
Member of Congress