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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

December 30, 2010

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

Dear President Obama:

I am writing to request that you consider issuing a Presidential disaster declaration for the state of New Jersey, including the shore counties of Ocean and Monmouth in my Congressional District, which were hit especially hard by the weekend's extreme winter storm.

The blizzard blanketed much of New Jersey with two or more feet of snow. This snowstorm was out of the ordinary because it was accompanied by very high winds and gusts that created blizzard like conditions, often drifting snow to several times that of the two foot depth snow fall in areas along the New Jersey shore. A statewide emergency was issued for the state on Sunday, December 26, 2010, asking all residents to stay home and keep off the roads.

Given the intensity of the storm and its aftermath, state, county, and local governments were exceedingly hard pressed to provide basic emergency services. For example, police in Ocean and Monmouth counties took the place of medical emergency providers whose vehicles were often immobilized, an especially critical situation in these shore counties with large elderly populations. At this time, crews are still working to take away abandoned vehicles from roadways, remove snow from even major arteries, and open areas to access for emergency services.

Considering the extremely high preliminary damage estimates that are now coming in from our communities, I hereby respectfully ask that after proper review, you declare a major disaster for these counties and all other areas in New Jersey requiring federal assistance. In the interim, I would be pleased to provide any assistance necessary in fulfilling this request. Thank you for considering this important matter.

Sincerely,

CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH
Member of Congress

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