

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

December 14, 2010

President Barack Obama
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20500-0005

Dear Mr. President,

We are writing in support of the State of Vermont's request for a major disaster declaration in the wake of recent, severe windstorms that caused widespread damage across the state.

On December 1, 2010, severe winds blew across Vermont, peaking in some areas at ninety miles per hour and including hurricane-like gusts exceeding seventy-three miles per hour. The storm caused severe and widespread damage across the entire state to buildings, property, and infrastructure. The heaviest damage was sustained in the communities on the western down slope of the northern Green Mountains, including Lamoille, Chittenden, and Franklin Counties. Roofs were ripped away or damaged, windows blown in, and utility poles and wires were downed across the region.

Over the course of the storm, nearly forty-thousand Vermont homes and businesses lost power, in some areas for as long as five days. Fifteen health care centers and state office facilities lost power during the storm. Vermont Emergency Management mobilized state agencies in response and the American Red Cross provided coordination of services.

The task of restoring power has been particularly burdensome because of the large amount of debris that needs to be cleared in remote and high terrain areas. In one area a utility had to completely rebuild its system in order to restore power. Initial damage estimates from the December 1 storm exceed \$2 million.

The scope of the damage from the storm is of such magnitude that federal assistance is merited. We appreciate FEMA's responsiveness in compiling a preliminary damage assessment and request your continued assistance and your support for this major disaster declaration.

Sincerely,



Patrick Leahy
United States Senator

Bernard Sanders
United States Senator



Peter Welch
United States Representative