

**AMERICAN PUBLIC WORKS ASSOCIATION
AMERICAN SOCIETY OF CIVIL ENGINEERS
ASSOCIATION OF STATE FLOOD PLAIN MANAGERS
INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF EMERGENCY MANAGERS
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES
NATIONAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION
NATIONAL RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ASSOCIATION
U.S. CONFERENCE OF MAYORS**

May 13, 2010

The Honorable Daniel Inouye, Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Thad Cochran, Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Inouye and Ranking Member Cochran:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, we are writing to urge your support for Senate action on the supplemental funds requested by the President for the Disaster Relief Fund (DRF). The House passed H.R. 4899 which included \$5.1 billion for the DRF on March 24, 2010.

It is our understanding the \$5.1 billion in supplemental funds requested by the Administration earlier this year for the DRF is intended to cover all known claims from Hurricane Katrina and the anticipated expenses of Fiscal Year 2010, if there are no large scale disasters. While we appreciate the resource strained economic environment, these funds remain critical to effective disaster response and recovery of our communities.

On February 4, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) announced a delay in public assistance funding for declared disasters in order to conserve funds for immediate needs for individuals, debris removal, and emergency protective measures. Currently there are critical recovery projects in our states and communities which are on hold due to the lack of funds. We have attached an April 30, 2010 FEMA chart showing the backlog of Disaster Relief Fund unfunded (deferred) projects totaling \$996,625,587 which is impacting 49 states and territories. This total includes \$848,290,830 for infrastructure, \$117,769,731 for mitigation and \$30,565,025 for fire management. These numbers do not include the expected high costs for the recent disasters such as Rhode Island and Tennessee. In some states with severe winter weather, the construction season may be lost. In addition, due to the hold on disaster mitigation projects opportunities for reduction of future losses are being missed.

Although FEMA has taken steps to close old disasters and has deferred funding, FEMA currently estimates that the Disaster Relief Fund will be insolvent in June and unable to fund even immediate needs. This is particularly alarming since hurricane season is fast approaching.

If the Disaster Relief Fund is not replenished by June, the federal response to disasters will be seriously compromised, putting citizens and the nation at greater risk for loss of life and property. We urge quick action on the supplemental request to ensure that our nation's states and communities get the support they need for responding to and recovering from disasters.

Sincerely,

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