



The Weekly Update

Tennessee General Assembly

House of Representatives

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FOR FLOOD VICTIMS

I had the opportunity yesterday to fly over Davidson County with Governor Bredesen and Mayor Dean and see the devastation in the aftermath of the floodwaters. I was on the ground yesterday in Bellevue and I am back out today visiting as many of my flooded areas as possible.

I am doing my best to get more dumpsters out into the flooded areas, and am awaiting responses to requests for fan donations to assist in drying out flooded homes.

We are all shell shocked at the devastation and are still trying to plan the best recovery strategy. The Nashville Red Cross number is 250-4300 if you need Red Cross assistance. The Metro Police number is 862-8600, Metro Water is 860-4600 and the Community Hotline is 862-8574. Please know that you can call my office at 741-4317 if you need assistance and I will try my best to direct you to the proper authority.

You already know to contact your insurance agents, to check for structural damage, to make pictures of damage and make a list of damaged and lost items. I am very aware that many homeowners do not have flood insurance. I just received some information from Congressman Jim Cooper's office regarding federal assistance, and will copy his letter below.

Our prayers go out to the individuals who have lost family members and friends, and to those suffering in this widespread damage. Once again, please call me and tell me how I can help you.

Now, for the letter from Congressman Cooper.

Good morning.

I am writing to provide you with information on federal assistance that will be available to communities and individuals in our area, once federal disaster assistance is granted by President Obama. This message is being sent to Mayors, State Legislators, and other elected and appointed officials in Middle Tennessee. Business and non-profit leaders are also included.

Yesterday morning, I organized a letter with other U.S. Representatives Marsha Blackburn, Lincoln Davis, and Steve Cohen, urging the Governor to seek federal assistance as soon as possible.

Last night, Gov. Bredesen, officially asked for federal assistance as the damage our counties suffered during last weekend's storm is beyond our state's capability to handle.

The President spoke with Gov. Bredesen yesterday, and we expect that the official federal disaster declaration is imminent. When that declaration comes through, federal resources will be available. Those resources can be summarized in three distinct categories:

1) "Public Assistance" is for local governments and some nonprofits.

This is for larger scale debris removal, emergency protections, repair/restoration of publicly owned facilities. This funding is typically a 75:25 federal match with the state determining how to split up the 25%.

2) "Individual Assistance" is for housing and non-housing needs (details follow):

- "Housing Assistance" to cover hotels, rentals, repairs that insurance doesn't cover.

- "Other than Housing Assistance" for people and businesses as a last resort. It covers medical, burial, home, etc, if all other sources of assistance have been exhausted.

3) Small Business Administration loans (non-FEMA)

This is for physical home or business repair as well as "economic injury" to a small business.

In the coming days we will provide more information on each of these, and FEMA personnel will be on the ground ready to assist.

Citizens will also be able to access information through an 800 number: (800.621-3362), or at www.DisasterAssistance.gov.

Regards,

Jim Cooper

Member of Congress

One more note: I have just this minute been told that FEMA will be on the ground tomorrow, May 5. As soon as I get more information I will pass it along.

