

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510
April 8, 2005

Michael D. Brown
Under Secretary of Homeland Security for
Emergency Preparedness and Response
Department of Homeland Security
500 C Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20472

Dear Under Secretary Brown:

I write today to respectfully request that you declare a major federal disaster area for 14 counties in New York State. As you may know, New York experienced a violent storm last weekend causing damage to homes and infrastructure. After his visit to the regions that suffered damage from the weekend's violent storms, Governor Pataki declared a State Disaster Emergency for the following 14 counties and contiguous areas in New York State; Broome, Chenango, Cortland, Delaware, Greene, Montgomery, Orange, Otsego, Rensselaer, Schenectady, Schoharie, Sullivan, Tioga, and Ulster.

It is my understanding that Governor Pataki is currently seeking aid from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for disaster assistance for the following categories of aid: 1) Individual Assistance for citizens who suffered losses, including the Individual and Households program, disaster unemployment insurance, and Small Business Administration loans; and 2) Public Assistance to reimburse communities for debris removal, emergency response efforts and restoration of public infrastructure to the following counties in New York State

Reported rainfall amounts from across the state averaged 1-3 inches with much higher totals of 2-4 inches in western New York and 3-6 inches in the Catskill region. As rain-swollen rivers crested and overflowed, roads were closed and hundreds of residents were forced to evacuate their homes.

Residents and businesses recognize that springtime in Upstate New York often brings damaging storms; however, it appears that this spate was especially severe. Already strained by the burden of skyrocketing municipal budgets, these communities simply cannot bear the extra burden placed upon them by severe weather systems. As the storm clouds subside and the sun begins to break through today, I hope you will quickly declare a State of Emergency in these counties so that we can move forward together in seeking federal assistance for these communities. As you are aware, without FEMA's help, the ability of these local governments to deliver the essential services their citizens depend on could be greatly diminished. I understand that FEMA is currently conducting a damage assessment along with State inspectors to determine the impact these storms and flooding had on individuals and communities in the impacted areas. I urge you to grant federal disaster status to these regions and release IA and PA funds to help the families and businesses get back on their feet.

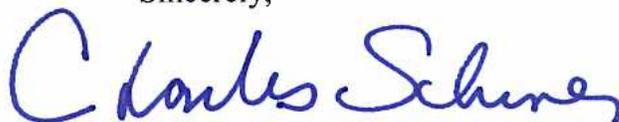
PLEASE RESPOND TO THE FOLLOWING OFFICE:

<input type="checkbox"/> ALBANY: LEO O'BRIEN BUILDING ROOM 420 ALBANY, NY 12207 (518) 431-4070	<input type="checkbox"/> BINGHAMTON: FEDERAL OFFICE BUILDING 15 HENRY STREET ROOM B6 BINGHAMTON, NY 13901 (607) 772-8109	<input type="checkbox"/> BUFFALO: 111 WEST HURON ROOM 620 BUFFALO, NY 14202 (716) 846-4111	<input type="checkbox"/> HUDSON VALLEY: P.O. Box A RED HOOK, NY 12571 (914) 285-0741 (845) 569-0923	<input type="checkbox"/> LONG ISLAND: TWO GREENWAY PLAZA 145 PINE LAWN ROAD ROOM 300N MELVILLE, NY 11747 (631) 753-0978	<input type="checkbox"/> NEW YORK CITY: 757 THIRD AVENUE SUITE 1702 NEW YORK, NY 10017 (212) 486-4430 TDD: (212) 486-7661	<input type="checkbox"/> ROCHESTER: 100 STATE STREET ROOM 3040 ROCHESTER, NY 14614 (716) 263-5866	<input type="checkbox"/> SYRACUSE: 100 SOUTH CLINTON ROOM 841 SYRACUSE, NY 13261 (315) 423-5471	<input type="checkbox"/> WASHINGTON: 313 HART SENATE OFFICE BUILDING WASHINGTON, DC 20510 (202) 224-6542 TDD: (202) 224-0420
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Thank you for your consideration of my request. I strongly urge the approval of this request and look forward to hearing about your quick approval, as well as FEMA's robust response to provide these areas with much needed aid. I am sure you will agree that given the multiple financial demands these communities face, they deserve to be reimbursed as quickly as possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Charles E. Schumer". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "C".

Charles E. Schumer
United States Senate