

Senators Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.) and Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.) and Congressman Peter Welch (D-Vt.) announced Wednesday that the counties of Chittenden, Franklin and Lamoille will receive federal disaster funds in response to damage caused by severe storms in early December.

The funds were triggered for release by a disaster declaration issued today by President Obama. The delegation wrote the President in the aftermath of the storm asking for this declaration, arguing that the scope of the damage was such that it merited federal assistance. The storm, which included winds of up to ninety miles per hour, caused severe damage to buildings, property and infrastructure and left nearly 40,000 Vermont homes and business without power. You can read the letter the delegation sent to President Obama [here](#).

The disaster declaration will provide funds to assist with emergency work and the repair of disaster-damaged facilities. These funds will be available to Chittenden, Franklin and Lamoille counties, which were hit hardest by the storm. Additionally, all Vermont counties will be eligible for disaster mitigation grants, which provide assistance for actions taken to prevent or reduce long-term risk to life and property from natural hazards.

"We're happy the President made this declaration that will provide much needed help to struggling Vermonters," the delegation said in a statement. "Vermonters are no strangers to severe weather and know well how to come together and rebuild after such incidents. We look forward to working with state and federal agencies to ensure these funds are well spent and get to those who need them."

The Vermont Division of Emergency Management will coordinate the relief efforts.