

[By Bob Kinzel](#)

(Host) Congressman Peter Welch is building a bipartisan coalition of House members to ensure that Congress appropriates enough money to pay for disaster relief efforts in all the states hit hard by tropical storm Irene.

Today, Welch will chair a meeting of 48 Republican and Democratic members from the flood affected states:

(Welch) "Where all of us are on the same page and we're saying hey our job is to get the relief money back to our districts so they can rebuild. And there's a unity of interest whether you're a Republican or a Democrat. We all represent Republicans and Democrats and this storm did not play favorites on the basis of what Party you were."

(Host) Some House Republican leaders have indicated that they won't support another billion dollars in disaster relief money unless a corresponding amount of money is cut from the federal budget.

Welch says this is not the time for philosophical budget battles:

(Welch) "What we can't allow to occur is to have recurrence of the debt ceiling debacle there's too many people too many businesses that are really hammered and we have to act in Congress. The damage of Hurricane Irene that was an act of God, but the funding we need to get people back on their feet that's an act of Congress."

(Host) Welch says FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate will also attend the meeting to give the group a progress report on flood recovery efforts in all of the affected states.