

Rep. Peter Welch (D-Vt.) and the bipartisan House Hurricane Irene Coalition today released a Coalition letter to House leaders urging their support for critical disaster assistance funding in their districts. At a press conference, Welch and Coalition members outlined the scope of damage to their districts, the recovery efforts underway, and the need for urgent action by Congress to ensure federal resources are available.

In the letter to Speaker John Boehner and Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi, Welch and 39 of the Coalition Members urged the leaders to ensure FEMA has the funds it needs to pay for recovery efforts in states affected by Hurricane Irene. The White House has estimated the cost of Irene to be \$1.5 billion. The letter was signed by 28 Democrats and 12 Republicans.

"As members of the Hurricane Irene Coalition, we respectfully request your leadership in ensuring FEMA and the other federal agencies involved in the relief and recovery efforts have the funds necessary to fulfill their mission in response to Hurricane Irene," the Coalition wrote.

The Hurricane Irene Coalition – convened by Welch – is a bipartisan group of Members whose districts were affected by the storm. It has two purposes: First, to ensure FEMA has the resources it needs to support the recovery effort. Second, to work with FEMA and other federal agencies and serve as a resource for Members to support recovery efforts in their districts.

The full text of the letter is [here](#) and also copied below. Signers include Welch (D-Vt.), Butterfield (D-N.C.), Jones (R-N.C.), Scott (D-Va.), Sarbanes (D-Md.), Ruppersberger (D-Md.), Carney (D-Del.), Meeks (D-N.Y.), Pascrell (D-N.J.), Holt (D-N.J.), Nadler (D-N.Y.), Lowey (D-N.Y.), Hinchey (D-N.Y.), Owens (D-N.Y.), Hayworth (R-N.Y.), Gibson (R-N.Y.), Hanna (R-N.Y.), Tonko (D-N.Y.), Courtney (D-Conn.), DeLauro (D-Conn.), Murphy, (D-Conn.), Olver (D-Mass.), Neal (D-Mass.), Fattah (D-Pa.), Brady (D-Pa.), Meehan (R-Penn.), Marino (R-Penn.), Barletta (R, Penn.), Schwartz (D-Penn.), Langevin (D-R.I.), Grimm (R-N.Y.), Pitts (R-Penn.), McCarthy (D-N.Y.), Lance (R-N.J.), Pallone (D-N.J.), Himes (D-Conn.), Cicilline (D-R.I.), Bishop (D-N.Y.), Harris (R-Md.), Fitzpatrick (R-Pa.)

Dear Speaker Boehner and Democratic Leader Pelosi,

As members of the Hurricane Irene Coalition, we respectfully request your leadership in ensuring FEMA and the other federal agencies involved in the relief and recovery efforts have the funds necessary to fulfill their mission in response to Hurricane Irene.

Early estimates put the cost of Irene in the billions. Relentless rain, flooding and wind devastated our communities and took the lives of at least 44 people in 13 states. Meanwhile,

the costs of flooding from Tropical Storm Lee are just beginning to mount.

While our constituents are working to get back on their feet, they cannot do it alone. Please provide funding that ensures the swift recovery of the families, farms, businesses in our districts.

Sincerely,

PETER WELCH

Member of Congress