

The U.S. Department of Transportation will release \$15 million in emergency funds to help Vermont rebuild and repair roads and bridges destroyed or damaged by floods, Vermont's congressional delegation announced today.

The Federal Highway Administration emergency grant includes \$14 million for repairing damage caused last August by Tropical Storm Irene, according to Sens. Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.) Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.) and Rep. Peter Welch (D-Vt.).

Another \$1 million will help cover repair costs for highways and bridges washed out during heavy spring flooding.

The funding was released less than a week after Congress approved and President Barack Obama signed legislation funding emergency relief for Vermont and other states recovering from natural disasters like Tropical Storm Irene.

"U.S. Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood has once again demonstrated a strong understanding of the magnitude of the disaster that has struck Vermont and the need for timely federal help. I appreciate that very much," said Sanders, a member of the transportation subcommittee of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

Leahy is a senior member of the Senate Appropriations Committee and of its transportation subcommittee, which oversees funding for this and other transportation programs. Leahy said, "Rebuilding our bruised and broken roads and bridges is our most urgent recovery priority. We appreciate Secretary LaHood's continued support. Now that we have replenished this depleted emergency transportation fund and enacted key cost waivers that Vermont needs, we have cleared the path to getting on with this repair work." The annual transportation budget bill signed into law last Friday includes funding and waivers that Leahy added for Vermont's transportation recovery efforts. Leahy's provisions were supported in Congress by Welch and Sanders.

"Vermonters are working hard to recover from Tropical Storm Irene and this will help," Welch said. "I'm thankful to Secretary LaHood for his timely and continued attention to the needs of Vermonters."

\$15 Million Emergency Aid for Vermont

Tuesday, 22 November 2011 16:53
