

WASHINGTON DC – Members of the Iowa Delegation urge disaster relief reform in a joint letter to Chairman John Olver of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development (THUD). The letter supports an amendment that will allow disaster stricken communities greater access and use of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) disaster relief funds. The amendment, introduced by Senator Landrieu (D-LA) and co-sponsored by Senator Grassley and Senator Harkin, was added to the THUD Appropriations bill in the Senate, and would allow states and communities that received CDBG disaster funding to use that funding as a local match, share, or contribution toward federal projects.

“The ailing economy coupled with the floods of last summer have left many Iowans overwhelmed at the loss of so many basics within their communities,” **said Congressman Loeb sack.**

“From homes to schools to libraries to sewage facilities and public buildings, Iowans have many projects to tackle on the road to recovery. Allowing CDBG disaster relief funds to be used as the local cost share would lift an incredible burden off the shoulders of many communities in Iowa that are struggling to take care of their community members with too few funds and too many projects.”

“This action would allow communities that are affected by disasters to more quickly begin to rebuild and remove some of the immediate financial burdens on local governments. This change would directly impact the Iowa communities that are still recovering from the extensive flooding of 2008 and implementing flood prevention measures, including Des Moines and many other towns in the 3rd District,” **said Congressman Boswell.** “I commend Congressman Loeb sack for his leadership on this issue and his hard work to rebuild Cedar Rapids and the rest of the 2nd District, which was hit especially hard by the flood.”

“We have not forgotten the families, businesses, towns and cities that are still recovering from the historic floods of 2008,” **said Congressman King.** “This is a

common-sense request that will go a long way towards ensuring money provided to Iowa for flood relief is put to the best use possible.”

“The floods of 2008 had a devastating effect across eastern Iowa,” **Congressman Braley said.**

“Access to CDBG funds is crucial for progress on the road to recovery. It’s important that we work together to help victims continue to rebuild their homes and communities.”

“Given the recent estimates for the 2010 State of Iowa revenues, the use of CDBG funds for matching purposes would provide a significant boost to efforts to help Iowa recover from the devastating floods of 2008,” **noted Congressman Tom Latham, the ranking Republican on the THUD Subcommittee.**

To date, Iowa has received nearly \$800 million in CDBG disaster relief funds, which Iowa’s Congressional Delegation originally secured. This amendment will specifically alter the allowable use of funds acquired from the Consolidated Security, Disaster Assistance, and Continuing Appropriations Act of 2009, which prohibits the use of the CDBG disaster relief funds for a local match or cost share.

Iowa has received nearly \$642 million in CDBG funds from the Consolidated Security, Disaster Assistance, and Continuing Appropriations Act of 2009. The Landrieu amendment would remove the local match restriction, and allow these funds to be used by the state, or any cities and towns recovering from disasters, as a local match or contribution toward other federal projects.

The letter was written by Congressman Dave Loebsack, Congressman Leonard Boswell, Congressman Steve King, and Congressman Bruce Braley.