

United States Senate

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ENERGY AND NATURAL
RESOURCES COMMITTEE
ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

March 10, 2012

The Honorable Barack Obama
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20502

Dear Mr. President:

With great sadness I write to you regarding the countless West Virginians who are suffering as a result of severe weather that affected my state beginning on February 29, 2012.

As you are likely aware, several counties in West Virginia including Doddridge, Harrison, Lincoln, Marion, Monongalia, Preston, Ritchie, Roane, Taylor, and Wayne experienced significant damage from storms, tornadoes, flooding, mudslides, and falling trees. This severe weather carved a path of destruction through communities that are home to some of West Virginia's most vulnerable citizens – the elderly and the disabled.

After touring the devastated areas this week, I was struck by the hope and perseverance in the aftermath of great destruction. Although the survivors of this horrific weather event are showing great optimism, it is apparent to me that residents and local leaders, who are now tasked with rebuilding in the storm's wake, require resources beyond what local and state governments are equipped to provide.

To access federal disaster aid, Governor Earl Ray Tomblin made a request for a declaration of major disaster for the State of West Virginia, submitted March 9 under the

provisions of Section 401 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 5121-5208 (Stafford Act). I respectfully request that you review his request as quickly as possible and give the request every appropriate consideration.

The West Virginians who are suffering from this natural disaster are already working hard with their communities to rebuild, and now is the time for the federal government to be their partner.

With warm regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Joe Manchin III", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Joe Manchin III
United States Senator

cc: Ms. MaryAnn Tierney
Regional Administrator
FEMA, Region III