

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 8, 2014

The Honorable Shaun Donovan
Secretary
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
451 7th Street S.W., Room 1000
Washington, D.C. 20410

The Honorable Michael Boots
Acting Chair
Council on Environmental Quality
722 Jackson Place
Washington, D.C. 20503

Dear Secretary Donovan and Acting Chair Boots:

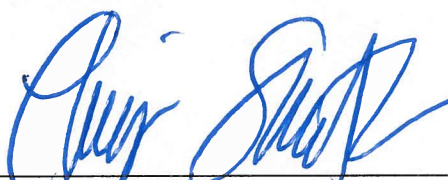
We are writing today to express our deep concern over the ongoing post-Sandy disaster recovery in New Jersey, and to request a meeting with you, lawmakers from New Jersey's shore area, and representatives from Governor Christie's recovery team to discuss these critical issues.

A letter from six of our colleagues in the New Jersey Senate underscores a deep frustration among residents and policymakers alike on a number of issues, including the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. We are concerned as well that the State of New Jersey may not have received its fair share of funding. Furthermore, there are ongoing concerns with the duplication of benefits analysis and the length of time needed to complete the historic and environmental reviews.

Nearly a year and a half after Superstorm Sandy and fourteen months after the President signed the first Sandy relief package, releasing the federal funds, far too many of our constituents remain out of their homes, stuck in limbo while attempting to navigate the grant application and reimbursement process. The New Jersey Rehabilitation, Reconstruction, Elevation and Mitigation (RREM) program received over 15,000 applications and currently has approximately 4,000 displaced, eligible homeowners on its waitlist who apparently forfeit reimbursement if they begin reconstruction without having first completed the requisite historic and environmental reviews. Additionally, there is concern that the third round of CDBG funds may be directed away from those residents still awaiting funds to repair their homes.

The issues raised by our colleagues in the New Jersey Senate mirror our own, and we look forward to working together with you and other stakeholders to expeditiously resolve all outstanding issues. Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,



CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH
Member of Congress



RODNEY FRELINGHUYSEN
Member of Congress



LEONARD LANCE
Member of Congress



FRANK LOBIONDO
Member of Congress



JON RUNYAN
Member of Congress