Continuing Commitment To Rebuilding

Phase Two of Federal Sandy Recovery Funds Focused on Getting Into Hands of Those Who Still Need to Rebuild and Low and Moderate Income New Jerseyans

OVER $1 BILLION OUT THE DOOR OR IN THE PIPELINE IN FIRST PHASE OF FUNDING

Sandy's destruction caused $36.9 billion worth of damage and needs – the largest and most ferocious storm in New Jersey's history. The Christie Administration has launched more than 50 recovery and rebuilding programs and initiatives at an unprecedented pace while working to get the initial $1.83 billion of Community Development Block Grant funds – of which $1.159 billion was targeted specifically for housing – out the door.

Today, ten months after the first round of CDBG Disaster Recovery funds started flowing in New Jersey, $1.03 billion is out the door or in the pipeline.

- Of the more than two-thirds of the housing money that has been obligated so far, *71.6 percent* has been awarded to low and moderate income (LMI) families, which is defined as those with income less than 80 percent of an area's median income.
- More than 5,100 Sandy-impacted homeowners have been preliminarily awarded a grant through the Reconstruction, Rehabilitation, Elevation & Mitigation (RREM) Program.
- 237 businesses have been approved for Stronger NJ Business Grants totaling nearly $11.5 million.
- 272 voluntary buyout offers have been made to willing sellers in Sayreville and South River through the Department of Environmental Protection's Blue Acres program.
- More than 2,900 people are working with the Department of Environmental Protection to elevate their homes through the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program Elevation Program.

Obama HUD Secretary Shaun Donovan: "Sandy was a tragedy of a scale—I'm a New Yorker—that I have never seen. And, by definition, money can never get to families fast enough to repair that damage. And so, are there things that could move faster? Absolutely right. But, if you look at overall, this money is moving faster than in any prior major disaster." (MSNBC, 1/29/14)

PHASE TWO FOCUSES ON PUTTING FAMILIES BACK IN THEIR HOMES

The second round of CDBG Disaster Recovery aid totals $1.463 billion, while New Jersey faces over $19 billion in unmet needs, forcing the state to make difficult choices in terms of priorities. While a variety of programs are designed to help residents and communities across the state rebuild, emphasis continues to be placed on providing housing assistance to low and moderate income families.

Helping Families And Small Business Owners:

The Christie Administration has proposed using more than half of the allotted funds -- $735 million -- to help homeowners and renters repair and rebuild while making sure small businesses get back on their feet:

- $390 million to assist approximately 3,000 homeowners through the Reconstruction, Rehabilitation, Elevation & Mitigation (RREM) Program, which is the state's largest Sandy housing recovery initiative.
    - The funding will build on the $710 million provided in the initial allocation.
    - With this additional funding, approximately two-thirds of those who received initial approval of a RREM housing award – or 65.5 percent -- will receive a grant.

- $245 million in additional funding will be made available for affordable housing programs through rental assistance and special needs assistance programs.

- $100 million to purchase 250 additional flood-prone homes and return the land to open space, creating a natural buffer to storm surge and flood waters. To date, more than 270 buyout offers have been made to Sandy-impacted homeowners.

- $5 million to continue the State's tourism and marketing push to show vacationers that the Jersey Shore is open for business.

Preparing for Future Storms:

New Jersey isn't just rebuilding, it's rebuilding better, stronger and smarter. To that end, the State plans to use $535 million of the second round of federal Sandy relief funds to harden the state's defenses against future storms to help prevent mass power outages and stem flooding in areas hit hardest by Sandy.

- $100 million to fund projects that would help protect areas at high risk for flooding and storm surge by building flood walls, pump stations as well as restoring wetlands, using permeable pavement and rain gardens.

- $210 million to create an energy bank dedicated to financing projects that would generate reliable power at critical sites – such as hospitals, emergency response centers and water and wastewater treatment plants – when the electric grid fails.

- $225 million to help government entities meet federal funding match obligations for a variety of recovery and resiliency projects such as repairing or constructing roads, bridges, levees, public buildings, water and sewer treatment plants, power generation and distribution facilities, sand dunes, beaches, telecommunication systems, and recreational facilities.

Strengthening Infrastructure And Communities:

The Christie Administration's plan also provides funding to help local governments better protect their residents during major storms and emergencies and prevent major tax increases related to destroyed homes.

- To prevent tax increases and ensure that Sandy-affected communities can maintain vital services – such as police, fire and trash pickup –New Jersey will dedicate $90 million for Essential Services grants to assist Sandy-impacted local governments that are experiencing budget distress.
    - To date, more than $44.5 million in funding has been awarded to 11 Sandy-impacted local governmental entities to prevent tax hikes in the wake of ratable losses in communities devastated by the storm.

- $10 million for the Unsafe Structures Demolition Program to demolish unsafe Sandy-impacted structures and remove debris.
    - The funding would be added to the $15 million provided in the first round.

- $10 million for planning initiatives, including funding for the Post Sandy Planning Assistance Grant Program to help Sandy-impacted local governments plan their rebuilding efforts to promote resilience and encourage economic growth. The funding would be added to the $5 million provided the program in the initial allocation.
    - To date, more than $1.8 million in planning grants have been awarded to 35 local governments.

- $5 million for the Code Enforcement and Zoning Program to help code enforcement and zoning offices in Sandy-impacted municipalities respond to the influx of rebuilding applications.
    - The funding would be added to the $6 million provided in the initial allocation.