

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

November 1, 2012

The Honorable Barack Obama  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Mr. President:

We are writing to request that you assist New Jersey with the unprecedented level of damage to our transportation systems caused by Hurricane Sandy. The extraordinary scope of this disaster warrants providing emergency funds for transportation projects, expediting assistance to all impacted modes of transportation, dedicating staff to address transportation issues, delivering additional assets, and providing as much flexibility with federal programs as possible.

New Jersey's transportation infrastructure was devastated by Hurricane Sandy. The destruction included damage to our highways, rail lines, ports, and airports. Every one of New Jersey's transit lines experienced damage, including washed out tracks and flooded stations. The only passenger rail tunnel into New York City—which connects thousands of people to the city each day—is shut down. Many highways and bridges sustained significant damage, such as extensive washouts and sinkholes. Further, the Port of New York and New Jersey, which is the third largest port in the country, is closed, while extensive efforts are undertaken to repair damages at the terminals and reestablish freight rail lines. While the full extent of the damage caused by the storm is still being assessed, the preliminary reports indicate that significant federal support will be required.

The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) has the authority to provide funding and assist with emergency response efforts. For example, DOT administers the quick release emergency program to fund the repair of federal-aid roads and bridges damaged by natural disasters. This funding will be critical in New Jersey's early efforts to reestablish the road network. Additionally, DOT has the ability to provide expedited support for all modes of transportation through dedicated staff to support emergency efforts and the waiver of local matches on transportation formula funding. Where necessary, additional resources may also be necessary and DOT is well placed to coordinate efforts across states to ensure ample assets are available.

Yesterday, you visited New Jersey and saw the damage here first-hand. We thank you and the entire Administration for your tremendous support and for pledging to act decisively to rebuild New Jersey from this terrible storm. An important step in this effort will be getting New

Jersey's transportation network back up and running and we look forward to working with you on this important initiative.

Sincerely,

  
FRANK R. LAUTENBERG

  
ROBERT MENENDEZ

Cc: Secretary Ray LaHood, Department of Transportation