

ROY BLUNT  
MISSOURI

260 RUSSELL SENATE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-2508  
202-224-5721

## United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

September 30, 2011

COMMITTEES:  
APPROPRIATIONS

COMMERCE, SCIENCE  
AND TRANSPORTATION

RULES AND ADMINISTRATION

SELECT COMMITTEE  
ON INTELLIGENCE

The Honorable Craig Fugate  
Administrator  
Federal Emergency Management Agency  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
500 C Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20472

Dear Administrator Fugate,

Over the past year, Missouri and the entire country have faced numerous natural disasters that devastated the livelihoods of people in our communities. As we work to rebuild, the scope of these events has placed unusual logistical and financial pressures on our nation's disaster response and rebuilding efforts.

Overall, I believe FEMA's response to these disasters has been satisfactory. I appreciate the work that your team has done, and I commend your efforts to remain in contact with officials at all levels of government in order to help the people affected by floods and tornadoes in Missouri. These are not easy tasks, and I recognize the challenges your organization is facing.

However, given these additional pressures, it is essential that we have accurate and honest assessments of our disaster needs. With record federal debt and high unemployment, we must ensure that we are spending taxpayer dollars effectively as Americans work to rebuild their homes, businesses, and communities in the aftermath of natural disasters.

Unfortunately, as a result of the recent disaster funding debate, I am concerned that these funding determinations may have been made based on other factors rather than need-based analysis. Congress, not the Executive Branch, has a responsibility to apportion funds. At the very least, I am convinced that Congress needs a full understanding of the steps that were taken by FEMA to address a funding shortfall that Congress may have helped cause through deficiencies in the legislative process.

On September 9, 2011, the Obama Administration requested an additional \$500 million for FEMA's disaster relief fund to meet the needs for the remaining portion of the 2011 fiscal year. This request came in response to a concern expressed by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). I stated at the time that I was prepared to do whatever was necessary to ensure that FEMA received the resources it needed to ensure that people affected by these disasters received the assistance they had been promised.

But just 15 days later on the eve of that deadline and in the midst of a heated policy debate on Capitol Hill over these specific funds, it was determined that FEMA suddenly no longer needed any additional funds for the rest of the fiscal year. Without sufficient explanation, the agency suddenly identified millions of dollars in existing funds to cover the balance of the fiscal year.

In order to get a better understanding of the drastic change in FEMA's needs over the course of the last month, I would appreciate your response to the following concerns:

- What criteria were used in the determination of the initial September 9, 2011 request and the reassessment on September 26, 2011?
- When did FEMA first realize that it had located an additional four days of funding?
- What changed during that time, and why weren't those factors foreseeable upon the initial request?
- After the initial September 9, 2011 request, was there any unscheduled reduction in committed services?
- Was there any input from the White House, Congress, or elsewhere outside of FEMA regarding the status of the disaster relief fund and the ongoing appropriation debate on Capitol Hill?
- Have any disaster-related needs been left unmet in these communities due to the actions taken by FEMA, for whatever reason, during the final weeks of September?

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I look forward to your timely response and our continued partnership to deliver much-needed assistance to people affected by disasters throughout the United States.

Sincere regards,



Roy Blunt