May 24, 2009

The Honorable Barack Obama
The President of the United States
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Through: Mr. Major Phil May
Regional Administrator - FEMA Region IV
3003 Chamblee Tucker Road
Atlanta, Georgia 30341

RE: Request for Major Disaster Declaration (Individual Assistance)

Dear President Obama:

Under the provisions of § 401 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 5121-5207 (Stafford Act), and implemented by 44 CFR § 206.36, I request that you declare a major disaster for the state of Florida as a result of severe storms, flooding, flash flooding, straight-line winds and tornadoes with an Incident Period beginning May 17, 2009 and continuing. I have determined that the severity and magnitude of these storms are so significant that effective response is beyond the capabilities of the state and the affected local governments and that supplementary federal assistance is necessary. I am specifically requesting Individual Assistance (including Disaster Housing, Individual and Households Program, Disaster Unemployment Assistance, Disaster Legal Services, Crisis Counseling, Small Business Administration disaster loans and Other Needs Assistance) for Volusia County. In the coming days, the state may submit additional requests for preliminary damage assessments (PDA) and further county designations for federal assistance under these and other programs.

Commencing May 17, 2009, a complex storm system produced severe weather over the peninsula resulting in flooding rains, severe thunderstorms, straight-line winds and tornadoes. This event follows severe weather just last month in which you issued a major disaster declaration for 24 counties (see FEMA-1831-DR). Above all, in the last nine months, this is the third major disaster to strike the state. Last August, Tropical Storm Fay pounded the state with torrential downpours, flash flooding, river flooding, tornados, straight-line winds, tropical storm force winds and thundershowers. As a result, 45 of Florida’s 67 counties were declared a major disaster (see FEMA-1785-DR). The combined total of these two events have resulted in approximately $330 million in damages to private and public property ($250 million resulting from Tropical Storm Fay and $80 million from last April’s flooding event). In between these events, the State Emergency Response Team has also been active in responding to wildfires in Martin County (see FEMA-2819-FM) and an outbreak of H1N1 swine flu.

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To date, heavy rainfall associated with a low pressure system in the Gulf of Mexico has produced record amounts of rainfall across portions of Northeast and Central Florida. Volusia County has been hit the hardest (approximately 1531 households have suffered minor or major damage). The most intense rainfall fell over Volusia, Seminole and parts of Orange Counties. Ormond Beach (Volusia County) showed an accumulated rainfall of 27.92 inches. At Daytona Beach (Volusia County), the rain gauge at the Daytona International Airport is 9.34 inches above the wettest May on record, when 12.33 inches of rain fell in 1976. As of today, Daytona International Airport shows 21.67 inches, with 20.63 inches received over the past seven days. The wettest month of all time was 24.82 inches in October 1924. In some areas, these rainfall totals meet or exceed storm totals received from Tropical Storm Fay in 2008.

This complex storm system has also impacted river basins causing moderate flooding conditions along the Black Creek near the town of Middleburg, Clay County, with minor flood conditions reported along the St. Johns and St. Mary's Rivers near the towns of Astor and MacClenny respectively. This storm system is also responsible for a damaging tornado that struck the city of Casselberry in Seminole County just before midnight on May 19, damaging 11 manufactured homes. Severe thunderstorms commencing on May 17 also produced eight separate reports of straight-line winds in Alachua, Duval, Flagler, and St. Johns counties. These same coastal communities have also experienced significant beach erosion and pier damages due to high surf conditions.

The concentration of damages to individuals is isolated in just a few communities, but the overall trauma to the region is great. In addition to damage to public and private property, the flooding that has occurred thus far has also caused a significant stress on local agriculture crop production. In particular, potato farmers in Flagler and Putnam counties risk losing crop production of about $45 million due to extremely wet soil conditions.

In response to this complex storm system, on May 22, 2009, I declared a state of emergency for Brevard, Clay, Duval, Flagler, Lake, Nassau, Orange, Putnam, Seminole, St. Johns and Volusia Counties and directed the State Coordinating Officer to execute the state’s Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan in accordance with Section 401 of the Stafford Act (see Executive Order 09-81).

On May 22, 2009, the State Coordinating Officer made a formal request to FEMA for joint Individual and Public Assistance PDA teams to determine the magnitude of damage caused by this flooding event. To date, the amount of damages to households in the Volusia County include minor and major damage to 1531 households -- 619 major affected households and 912 minor affected households (see Enclosure A for preliminary estimates of the types and amount of assistance needed under the Stafford Act). Some other factors for you to consider in measuring the severity, magnitude and impact of the disaster as it pertains to communities in Volusia County:

- The most heavily damaged community, the city of Daytona Beach, with a population of 64,112, has the lowest income population - described as low to extremely low income. The average median household income is $25,439 and 26% of the population is below the poverty line. 14.4% of the population are 65 years of age or older and live alone.
- 97% of the student population at Campbell Middle School in Daytona Beach receives free or reduced lunches.
• Approximately 95% of the county population receives food stamps.
• Most survivors do not possess sufficient funds to replace their personal losses.
• Mold and mildew is anticipated to cause major health issues because survivors do not have the funds to replace water damaged furniture and belongings.
• 469 of the 783 (59.8%) affected single family residences have an average home value of $117,000 (average in the county is $191,085).
• Less than 1% of the county population has flood insurance.

Since activation on May 22, the following information illustrates the nature and amount of state and local resources that have been or will be used to respond to and recovery from the conditions of this disaster:

• A state of emergency was declared on May 22, 2009 (see Executive Order 09-126).
• The State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) has been activated since May 22.
• A total of six joint FEMA/State PDA teams have been deployed to conduct Individual and Public Assistance damage assessments in the affected counties.
• ESF 6 (Mass Care) will establish two Essential Service Centers on May 26 (one in Holly Hills and one in Daytona Beach, Volusia County). A total of 50 personnel have been deployed to assist with operations (25 personnel in each center).
• Deployed seven state personnel to Volusia County to assist with response and recovery operations (two liaison officers, two response personnel and three recovery personnel).
• Deployed one Department of Health regional advisor.

I certify that for this major disaster, the state and local governments will assume all applicable non-federal shares of costs required by the Stafford Act.

As of the date of this letter, flooding has inundated hundreds of homes and businesses in this region. Once these floodwaters fully recede, we expect to encounter issues related to vector control (mosquito abatement) and mold. This is the third major disaster (excluding a Fire Management Grant) to impact the state in the previous nine months.

Thank you again for your most recent assistance. I have designated Ruben D. Almaguer as the State Coordinating Officer for this request. He will work with FEMA and may provide further information or justification on my behalf. Thank you again for your support of Florida.

Sincerely,

Charlie Crist
Governor

Encl.

cc: Ruben D. Almaguer, State Coordinating Officer
ENCLOSURE A
TO MAJOR DISASTER REQUEST

May Flooding

Estimated Requirement for Individual Assistance under the Stafford Act

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Temporary Housing (Indicate No.)</th>
<th>Repairs</th>
<th>Replacement</th>
<th>Permanent Housing Construction</th>
<th>Other Needs Assistance</th>
<th>Other Program (Disaster Unemployment Assistance, Legal Services, and Crisis Counseling)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Volusia</td>
<td>$2,743,552</td>
<td>$6,761,000</td>
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<td>N/A</td>
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<td>Totals</td>
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<td>N/A</td>
<td>$500,000</td>
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</tbody>
</table>