U.S. SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION APPROVES DISASTER LOAN PROGRAMS FOR BROWARD COUNTY

TALLAHASSEE -- Governor Charlie Crist and Florida emergency management officials today announced that the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) has approved disaster loan funds for Broward County residents and businesses in response to the severe storms and flooding that occurred on December 17-18, 2009.

“We are grateful to Administrator Mills, Director Skaggs and our federal partners at the SBA for granting this needed disaster assistance to South Floridians,” said Governor Crist. “The SBA Disaster Assistance Loan Program is an excellent resource for homeowners, renters and businesses as they work to recover.”

“Disasters do not always occur within single jurisdictional boundaries,” said David Halstead, interim deputy director of the Florida Division of Emergency Management. “Under the declaration, residents and businesses in Broward and the contiguous counties of Miami-Dade, Collier, Palm Beach and Hendry are eligible to apply for loans if they suffered physical property damage or economic injury.”

The SBA offers loans of up to $200,000 to homeowners to repair or replace damaged or destroyed real estate. Homeowners and renters are eligible for loans of up to $40,000 to repair or replace damaged or destroyed personal property. Interest rates on the loans can be as low as 2.562 percent for homeowners and renters, to 4 percent for businesses. Loan amounts and terms are set by the SBA and are based on each applicant’s financial condition.

“We are thankful to have received this declaration,” said Broward County Emergency Management Director, Chuck Lanza. “The SBA’s rapid response will give affected residents and businesses in South Florida access to low-interest loan programs to begin the rebuilding process.”

Loan applications for physical damages can be filed until the close of business on March 1, 2010. Loan applications for economic injury can be filed until the close of business on September 29, 2010.

Small Business Administration customer service representatives will be on hand at the following location at the times listed below:

- More -
Broward County

Town of Pembroke Park – City Hall
3150 SW 52nd Avenue
Pembroke Park, Florida 33023

Opens: Tuesday, January 5 at 8:30 a.m.
Open: Tuesday, January 5 – Thursday, January 14 from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (Closed Saturday, January 9 and Sunday, January 10)
Closing: Thursday, January 14 at the close of business

Individuals and businesses unable to come to the loan center in person may obtain information and loan applications by calling the SBA’s Customer Service Center at 1-800-659-2955 (1-800-877-8339 for the hearing impaired), Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. EDT.

Affected business owners and residents can visit the SBA Web site at www.sba.gov/services/disasterassistance or send an e-mail to disastercustomerservice@sba.gov for more information. Florida residents affected by the severe storms and flooding may apply for disaster loans from SBA’s secure Web site at https://disasterloan.sba.gov/ela/. Completed applications should be returned to the Center or mailed to: U.S. Small Business Administration, Processing and Disbursement Center, 14925 Kingsport Road, Fort Worth, TX  76155.

For more information on the Florida Division of Emergency Management and to GET A PLAN!, please visit: www.FloridaDisaster.org. All students, teachers and parents can find educational information and free downloadable materials at: www.KidsGetAPlan.com. And for the latest flash reports go to: www.YouTube.com/FloridaSERT.

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