

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

March 15, 2012

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

Dear Mr. President:

We write to support Illinois Governor Pat Quinn's appeal of the denial of federal assistance for the State of Illinois for damage incurred as a result of deadly tornadoes on February 29 through March 2, 2012. Gallatin, Randolph, Saline, Union and Williamson Counties are affected. Governor Quinn has already declared these counties state disaster areas. Federal assistance is necessary to help the affected communities recover from the deadly disaster.

According to the Governor, Illinois was denied federal funding for these five counties because the information gathered during joint federal, state, and local preliminary damage assessments indicated the damage in these counties was not of the severity and magnitude that would warrant a major disaster declaration. Subsequent to the gathering of this information, however, additional information about the communities in these five counties has been brought to light. For example, the poverty rate in these areas of the state is nearly double the state average. The median income of the people in these counties is roughly half that of the rest of the state. Only about twenty percent of the residents affected by the tornadoes and storms have insurance to pay for this type of damage.

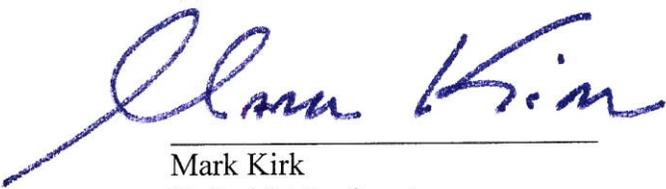
In addition to the demographic information identified by the State since the initial damage assessment, please consider the trauma experienced by these neighborhoods as a result of the storms when considering the state's appeal. In Harrisburg, where seven people lost their lives during and as a result of the tornado, 1,600 of the 9,600 residents are displaced because their homes were either destroyed or rendered uninhabitable. Despite its small size, Harrisburg is home to the majority of jobs located within a 30- to 40-mile radius in that part of our state. Without help, this disaster may have provided a blow the local economy simply cannot recover from fully.

We respectfully request that you make the necessary declaration so that people in these five counties can receive the assistance they need to repair damage. We thank you in advance for your timely consideration of this important request and stand ready to assist in any way appropriate.

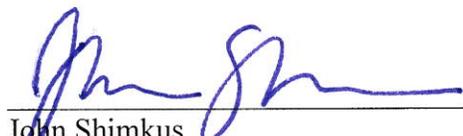
Sincerely,



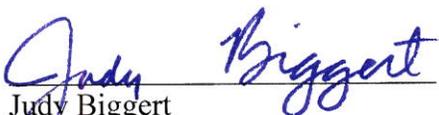
Richard J. Durbin  
United States Senator



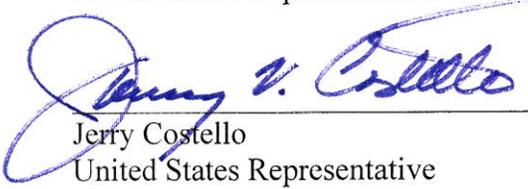
Mark Kirk  
United States Senator



John Shimkus  
United States Representative



Judy Biggert  
United States Representative



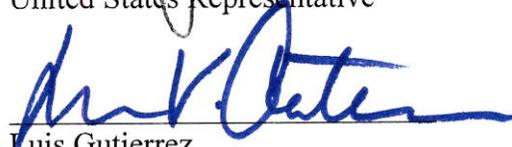
Jerry Costello  
United States Representative



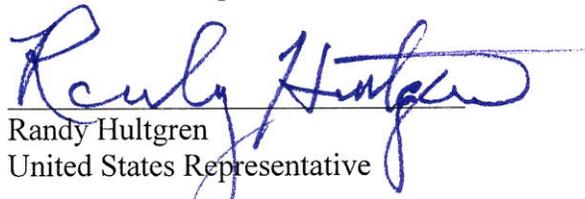
Danny K. Davis  
United States Representative



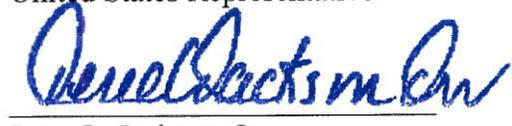
Robert Dold  
United States Representative



Luis Gutierrez  
United States Representative



Randy Hultgren  
United States Representative



Jesse L. Jackson, Jr.  
United States Representative



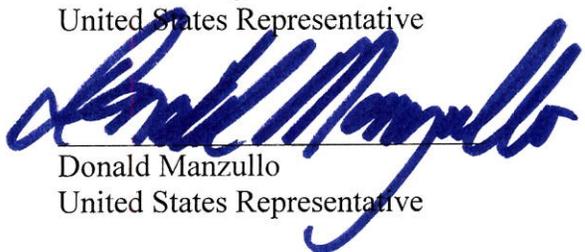
Timothy V. Johnson  
United States Representative



Adam Kinzinger  
United States Representative



Daniel Lipinski  
United States Representative



Donald Manzullo  
United States Representative

*Mike Quigley*

Michael Quigley  
United States Representative

*Bobby L. Rush*

Bobby L. Rush  
United States Representative

*Bobby Schilling*

Bobby Schilling  
United States Representative

*Joe Walsh*

Joe Walsh  
United States Representative

*Peter J. Roskam*

Peter J. Roskam  
United States Representative

*Jan Schakowsky*

Jan Schakowsky  
United States Representative

*Aaron Schock*

Aaron Schock  
United States Representative

###