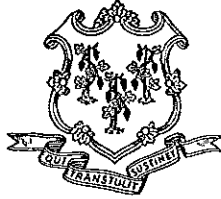


State of Connecticut
GENERAL ASSEMBLY



PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING, ROOM 2100

HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591

860-240-0550

March 18th, 2016

Governor Dannel P. Malloy
Executive Chambers, State Capitol
210 Capitol Ave
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Governor:

First, we would like to thank you for your help and interest in the crumbling foundation crisis in eastern Connecticut. Your commitment based on the active involvement of, at your direction, multiple agencies and staff is certainly welcomed.

We, however, continue to receive reports that there are higher than reported numbers of impacted homes. In addition, the community concerns continue to rise with a palpable sense of fear in the air. We have been told of failing home foundations, failing septic tanks and failing spillway dams. Beyond the financial devastation to the homeowners, the anxiety over of the collapse of the housing market and tax base in these communities is prevalent.

We are asking that a request to President Barack Obama be made for a major disaster declaration under the Stafford Act. We know that requests must be based upon finding that a situation is beyond the combined capabilities of the State and local governments and that supplemental federal assistance is necessary. We believe that this situation qualifies as a major disaster because of the large number of impacted homeowners; it appears that the failure of these structures is not covered by most insurance companies, and the cost will overwhelm the state and local resources.

While this disaster did not occur in a short time frame like a hurricane or severe storm, we argue that it should qualify for such assistance. The natural component of the deteriorating concrete was unforeseen. When this concrete was mixed and poured, industry standards were unaware to test for pyrrhotite in the mix. In fact, if this was a hurricane that swept into Connecticut and damaged this number of homes the FEMA standard of "major damage" would mandate a major disaster declaration. Under the FEMA degrees of damage criteria, these homes would certainly be classified as "major damage" due to the "substantial failure to structural elements of the residence." The only higher classification would be "destroyed."

Homeowners insurance appears to not routinely cover the replacement of foundations. We have anecdotal evidence of some insurance companies reimbursing homeowners and some not – leaving many homeowners without any ability to address the situation. In addition, the late onset of the damage to these homes often makes them ineligible for assistance from the New

Home Construction Guaranty Fund administered by the Department of Consumer Protection. The estimated replacement cost is between \$150,000 and \$250,000 per foundation and leaves many of our citizens with an inhabitable home both unsafe and deteriorating.

By receiving a major disaster declaration, Connecticut would be eligible for Individual Assistance based on the number of homes affected and the severity of the damage. This includes financial assistance, including grants, for homeowners to repair damage from the disaster to their primary residence that is not covered by insurance. The goal is to make the damaged home safe, sanitary and functional. Temporary housing could be provided, allowing homeowners to rent a place while the foundation was being removed and replaced.

We realize the request for a major disaster declaration for a crisis that is not a hurricane or storm is unusual. However, in recent years, the President has used FEMA to respond to other events that are outside the historical norm. The Boston Marathon bombing and the Texas Fertilizer Plant explosion both received Presidential Declarations from President Obama. Eastern Connecticut is facing an unprecedented crisis with these collapsing foundations. We believe that a major disaster declaration under the Stafford Act is necessary to allow these homeowners to rebuild and to prevent economic collapse in these communities.

We urge your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,



Catherine A. Osten
Senate Co-Chair
State Senator, 19th District



Philip Miller
House Co-Chair
State Representative, 36th District

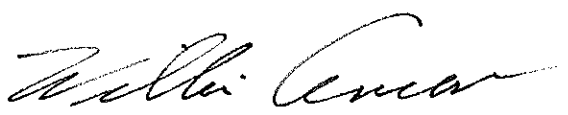


Stephen Cassano
Senate Vice Chair
State Senator, 4th District

Michael D'Agostino
House Vice Chair
State Representative, 91st District



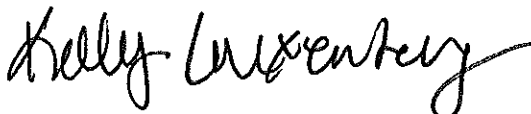
Arthur Linares
Senate Ranking Member
State Senator, 33rd District



William Aman
House Ranking Member
State Representative, 14th District



Anthony Guglielmo
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State Representative, 12th District