Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

March 12, 2013

The President
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We write in strong support of Governor Dannel P. Malloy's recent request for a major disaster declaration in the State of Connecticut as a result of the severe winter storm that occurred in the state from February 8-11, 2013. As discussed in his letter, the Governor is requesting Public Assistance, Categories A through G, including snow assistance, and Hazard Mitigation Assistance for all eight counties of Connecticut and the tribal lands of the Mashantucket Pequot and Mohegan Tribal Nations. Moreover, and equally as important for our state, is a request to increase the snow assistance window to at least 72 hours (currently at 48 hours) for all counties and tribal nations as a result of this historic weather event.

Faced with its fifth major disaster in two years, Connecticut has been overwhelmed by the costs associated with the totality of these storms – and the most recent snowstorm last month has only exacerbated the issue. The total snow assistance cost of this most recent storm as estimated by the Preliminary Damage Assessments is over $45 million, a staggering sum for local governments that have faced repeated major and costly storm response and recovery operations that have significantly strained municipal budgets.

According to the National Weather Service (NWS), snowfall totals for all eight of Connecticut's counties, including the tribal nations, met or exceeded the previous record. By all accounts the clean-up that took place both during and immediately after this record snowfall was unprecedented. The amount of snowfall—between two and three feet—coupled with incredible snowfall per hour rates meant that state and local governments simply could not keep up with the snow. Roads were inundated with such large amounts of snow that regular plows could not move the snow and, especially in the narrow urban streets, the plows had no place to put the snow.

As the Governor highlights in his letter to you, "the heavy equipment necessary to respond to this storm event simply did not exist at the municipal level," requiring support from contractors, the state Department of Transportation, and the National Guard among others in order to make roads safe and remove snow from downtown areas.

From our meetings and phone calls with local and state officials throughout and immediately after the storm, we are acutely aware of the tremendous financial burden this extraordinary level

of snow has placed on our state, particularly when taking all four previous major disasters into account. The intensity, winds, and total snow depth of this storm led the NWS to officially declare it a blizzard for a significant portion of Connecticut. However, FEMA's overly restrictive Snow Assistance Policy may prohibit our state from receiving all of the aid it rightly deserves as a result of this historic weather event. We respectfully request that you reconsider the arbitrary thresholds that could preclude the state to qualify for the 72 hour exemption in all counties.

We remain committed to providing any assistance to you and local and state officials as may be necessary to speed Connecticut's recovery from the tremendous costs as a result of this storm. Thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely,

RICHARD BLUMENTHAL
United States Senate

CHRISTOPHER S. MURPHY
United States Senate

ROSA L. DELAURO
Member of Congress

JOHN B. LARSON
Member of Congress

JOE COURTNEY
Member of Congress

JIM HIMES
Member of Congress

ELIZABETH ESTY
Member of Congress