

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

January 4, 2005

The Honorable George W. Bush
President of the United States
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue Northwest
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We are writing to express our strong support for Governor Joseph Kernan's request for federal assistance for the State of Indiana following the extreme winter weather emergencies that struck the State last month.

A severe winter storm moved into Indiana the evening of December 21. Over the next two days the intensity and the severity of the storm worsened, causing record and near record snowfalls in 50 southern, central, and eastern counties. Several areas received up to 24 inches of snow with sub-zero temperatures and harsh winds significantly exacerbating the effects of the storms. Counties in the heaviest snowfall areas were paralyzed for several days.

Eight fatalities have been directly attributed to the weather, and the heavy snow loads have caused roof collapses throughout the affected areas. Interstate, State, and Local highways were closed, including portions of I-64, I-69, and I-75. This left thousands of travelers stranded and necessitated rescue efforts by state and local authorities. Emergency shelters along these routes provided relief to over 1000 people. In addition, over 276,000 Indiana families depend on heating oil or propane deliveries for heat. The closure of these roads hampered the delivery of home heating supplies; posing a serious life-safety threat as temperatures dropped below zero in the areas affected by the storm.

On December 23, 2004, Governor Kernan declared a State of Disaster Emergency and since then the state has gone to great lengths to address the situation. However, due to the magnitude and severity of the storm, the Governor determined that effective response is beyond the capability of the state and local governments impacted by the storms. Supplemental federal assistance is urgently needed to save lives, protect public health and safety, protect property, and generally help Indiana's devastated communities recover from this severe weather event. We therefore respectfully ask you to give serious and timely consideration to Governor Kernan's request for federal assistance.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,



Rep. Steve Buyer (IN -04)



Rep. Dan Burton (IN -05)



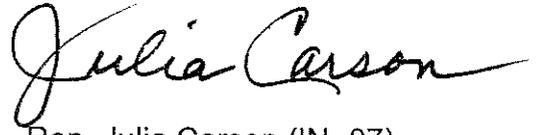
Rep. Pete Visclosky (IN-01)



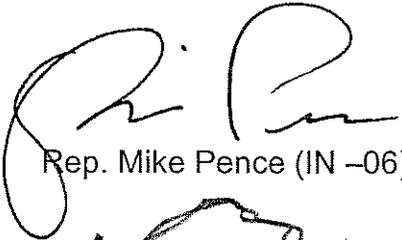
Rep. John Hostettler (IN -08)



Rep. Mark Souder (IN -03)



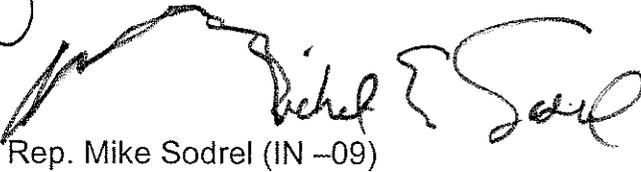
Rep. Julia Carson (IN -07)



Rep. Mike Pence (IN -06)



Rep. Chris Chocola (IN-02)



Rep. Mike Sodrel (IN -09)