

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

August 22, 2007

President George W. Bush
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We are writing in support of Illinois Governor Rod Blagojevich's request for a major disaster declaration for Winnebago County and Stephenson County as a result of flooding beginning August 7 and continuing through August 8, 2007.

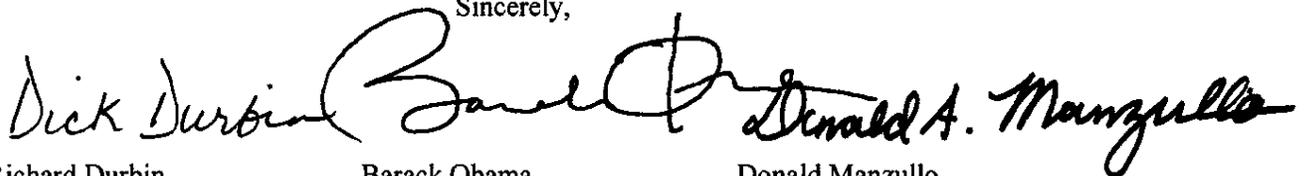
Preliminary assessments indicate that homes and businesses located in the path of the rapidly rising flood water in the City of Freeport in Stephenson County and the Village of Cherry Valley and the City of Rockford in Winnebago County received the most severe impacts of the flash flooding. These homes and businesses sustained structural damage to basements, foundations, and first floor living areas. The electrical, heating, air conditioning and ventilation systems in hundreds of homes sustained major damage. Governor Blagojevich declared Winnebago County a disaster area on August 7, 2007 and declared Stephenson County a disaster area on August 8, 2007.

The damage assessment found that 820 single or multi-family homes were impacted by the floodwaters, many sustaining major damage. Specifically, 245 single family homes and 52 multi-family homes were affected by floodwaters, 73 single family homes and 43 multi-family homes sustained major damage, and 274 single family homes and 121 multi-family homes suffered minor damage. Twelve single family homes were destroyed.

This is the second time in eleven months that the same area in Winnebago County, primarily in the City of Rockford, has been devastated by a flash flood. Governor Blagojevich's request for disaster assistance regarding the previous flood and his subsequent appeal were denied. As the community is still struggling to recover from last year's Labor Day flash flood, the need for federal disaster assistance is greater.

We respectfully request that you make the necessary declaration so that the residents of Winnebago County and Stephenson County can receive federal disaster assistance. Specifically, we support the Governor's request for Individual Assistance, including the Individuals and Households Program, and Small Business disaster loans. We also support the request for Hazard Mitigation Assistance for all counties statewide. We thank you in advance for your timely consideration of this important request and stand ready to assist in any appropriate way.

Sincerely,



Richard Durbin
United States Senator

Barack Obama
United States Senator

Donald Manzullo
United States Representative