



ONEIDA COUNTY
OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

ANTHONY J. PICENTE, JR.
County Executive
ce@ocgov.net

Feb. 21, 2018

U.S Department of Homeland Security
Federal Emergency Management Agency
Administrator Brock Long
500 C Street, SW
Washington D.C. 20472

Dear Administrator Long,

Recently you made a determination to deny New York State and Oneida County a disaster declaration for the flooding that devastated my community on July 1, 2017. At the time I called your decision "horrendous and wholly bereft of common sense." You have once again proven me right by denying the appeal of your decision.

Since July 1, my county has experienced even more severe weather events. These incidents caused additional flooding that caused severe damage that forced people to evacuate their homes. The cleanup is still ongoing, and the price tag will once again reach into the millions.

As you should know, we identified nearly \$10 million worth of damages in Oneida County alone pertaining to the July 2017 flooding. Oneida County has also committed \$12 million over the next six years for long-term flood mitigation projects to help ourselves. Our FEMA threshold is \$800,000.

I believe you and the FEMA administrators before you, have taken a parochial view of weather events in the northeastern part of the United States. The events we face apparently don't fit your criteria, yet our local damage continues to surpass our FEMA threshold tenfold and Oneida County is the only one paying the bill.

As a solution, I recommend backing out my community's share of the FEMA Disaster Relief Fund's \$6.159 billion price tag (not including the billions in supplemental funding), and let us use that money to deal with natural disasters here at home. The number might be small, but even if it's \$1, it will be more than we have received from FEMA for our persistent flooding and snow issues.

As I have said before and reiterate now, I will continue to do what I have done as a County Executive to solve problems the federal government is either too incompetent or unwilling to solve. I once again welcome the opportunity to explain this to you in person, if ever you do what's right and come to my community to explain your unwillingness to assist us.

Regards,

Anthony J. Picente Jr.
Oneida County Executive

CC: The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
CC: The Honorable Kirsten E. Gillibrand
CC: The Honorable Claudia Tenney