

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

November 8, 2011

The Honorable Craig Fugate
Director
Federal Emergency Management Agency
500 C Street SW
Washington, D.C. 20472

Dear Director Fugate:

As residents of western Alaska await arrival of a storm described by the National Weather Service as "extremely dangerous and life threatening," I write to request all appropriate federal resources are prepared and ready to respond if and when needed.

Alaskans are used to braving many extremes of weather but this storm, described as "of an epic magnitude rarely experienced," brings the added threat of major coastal erosion and flooding due to the absence of a barrier of shore-fast ice. If communities determine evacuation is necessary, coastal mayors I have spoken with are particularly concerned about evacuating residents in a timely manner if needed and obtaining financial support for such action.

Advance word of this storm was broadcast yesterday and it is expected to peak on Wednesday. Hopefully most residents have taken the advice to hunker down in advance of its approaching winds, which have already been clocked up to 83 mph at Shemya in the western Aleutians.

This approaching storm highlights the value and need for accurate forecasts of pending storms. As chair of the Senate Commerce Subcommittee on Oceans, Atmosphere, Fisheries and Coast Guard, I remain committed to full funding for the National Weather Service's Joint Polar Satellite System to continue to provide these forecasts without interruption for Alaska and the rest of the nation.

My office is prepared to respond to the needs of our citizens and I would appreciate your personal attention to this potential "storm of the century." Please keep me informed of any situation reports you issue and emergency needs of Alaskans during the storm and its aftermath. I would also appreciate a briefing from your office on interagency coordination to this event as soon as possible without interfering in your response.

Craig Fugate
November 8, 2011
Page 2

Please contact Bob King on my staff at (202) 224-0319 or bob_king@begich.senate.gov. We also work very closely with Robert Forgit in your Alaska office and appreciate his frequent contact with CW Floyd in our Alaska office.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Mark Begich
United States Senator

Cc: Dr. Jane Lubchenco, Administrator, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
ADM Robert J. Papp, Commandant, United States Coast Guard