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## Senate of Pennsylvania

September 20, 2023

David Padfield, Executive Director  
Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency  
1300 Elmerston Avenue  
Harrisburg, PA 17102

Dear Mr. Padfield:

*Randy,*

I am writing to respectfully and urgently request that the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) deploy funding earmarked in the last two state budgets for a state pilot individual disaster relief program to Berks County residents impacted by severe storms on July 9<sup>th</sup>.

As you know, on that day, up to nine inches of rain fell in a few hours causing flash flooding and significant damage to homes, businesses, schools, and public property in our area. Exeter, Muhlenberg, and Lower Alsace Townships were among the hardest hit areas. It has been over two months since that catastrophic storm and we still do not know if any assistance will be available through FEMA or other Federal programs. While I appreciate that disaster assistance requests require time to evaluate, there are impacted families who still are not able to return to their homes; they are running out of hope, money, and time.

As our request for individual assistance languishes in Washington, I grow increasingly concerned that Federal help will not be forthcoming, especially with a potential Federal government shutdown looming in the near future. As such, it is clear to me that the Commonwealth needs to step up and provide help to our citizens now. State funds are available to provide that help. We should not hold them in reserve waiting on Washington. Local residents, including many elderly and lower income individuals, were publicly promised help from Harrisburg in the days immediately following the storms. It is time that the Commonwealth step up to the plate and provide them with that help.

Please let me know what steps need to be taken to get our flood-impacted residents the state help they need to get back in their homes and return a semblance of normality to their lives. I look forward to hearing from you in the next few days. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Judith L. Schwank  
Senator—11<sup>th</sup> District

JLS/TG  
CC All Local Stakeholders