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AND LABOR

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION  
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Dear Homeowners:

I apologize that I have a prior commitment and cannot join you tonight. But I want to thank you for coming together to deal with this problem facing our community. As you know, the problems facing the Lake Ronkonkoma community were not caused by the federal government, but as a federal elected official, I am working to bring the federal government to the table to play a role in helping the community.

My office was first contacted about this issue in late 2005 after massive October rainfall exacerbated the situation. Upon learning about the problem, my first question was not about jurisdiction, but to find out what solutions we could help bring to the table. I would like to briefly update you on those actions:

1) I wanted to bring additional funding to assist local government in implementing a solution. Unfortunately, as a member of the legislative branch, I do not have executive authority to simply cut a check. However, my staff was able to identify funding that was obligated to another project that I felt was a less urgent need than dealing with the flooding. I was able to insert language into a bill--called the Technical Corrections bill--that would shift \$1.5 million from the other project, to be used to help assist with local flood control efforts. That bill passed the House of Representatives-- the chamber in which I serve-- in 2006 and again in 2007, unfortunately, the bill has not been taken up in the United States Senate. I am hopeful the Senate will address this legislation in the near future, which would bring some additional resources to bear.

2) I have been working with Legislator Kennedy to identify and authorize the US Geological Survey to take several steps that will help find solutions, including-- Conducting a bottom sampling of Lake Ronkonkoma to determine the thickness of the silt and its impact on natural recharge; establishing additional monitoring wells around Lake Ronkonkoma; and re-locating the current monitoring well number S-1811 as it is my understanding that this well appears to be underwater and non-functional.

3) FEMA—Due to the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000, all municipalities applying for FEMA grant money must have a FEMA approved All Hazards Mitigating Plan. Once Suffolk County has an approved plan they are eligible to apply for FEMA money under two separate programs for which I have attached fact sheets. The First is the Flood Mitigation Assistance Program and the other is the Pre-Disaster Mitigation Grant Program. It is important to understand that it is the responsibility of the local municipalities to apply through the State Emergency Management office who then reviews applications and submits them to FEMA. My office has reached out to both

FEMA and SEMO in order to obtain information to provide your local legislators. Once an official application has been submitted my office will work diligently to help obtain the FEMA funds that your local municipality applies for.

Thank you for allowing me to update you on actions I am taking on the federal level. I appreciate the problems that have brought you here and I am committed to working with you to find solutions. Please contact Lisa Wieber in my Coram District Office at 696-6500 if there is anything my office can be doing to assist.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tim Bishop", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Tim Bishop  
Member of Congress

TB/lw