



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY SERVICES & PUBLIC PROTECTION
DIVISION OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT & HOMELAND SECURITY



Testimony of Deputy Commissioner William P. Shea
Joint Appropriations/Commerce/Housing/Public Health Committees
RE: Department of Housing CDBG Allocation Plan
May 7, 2013

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in favor of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Allocation Plan. I am writing to provide you with some background on the Super Storm Sandy disaster recovery efforts taking place in Connecticut. The Connecticut Department of Emergency Services & Public Protection, Division of Emergency Management & Homeland Security (DEMHS), is charged with the statutory mission of establishing and maintaining a statewide coordinated and integrated program of emergency management and homeland security. In order to achieve this mission, DEMHS continually collaborates with local, state, federal, and private sector partners.

In the wake of Tropical Storm Irene in 2011, at the direction of Governor Malloy, DEMHS led an Emergency Planning and Preparedness Initiative, which included a statewide exercise in late July of 2012, as well as the establishment of a number of collaborative working groups. One of these groups is the Long Term Recovery Working Group (LTRWG), co-led by representatives from the Department of Insurance and the Department of Economic and Community Development and made up of members from state agencies, municipal representatives from the five DEMHS geographical emergency planning regions, federal partners, and non-governmental organizations such as the Red Cross and United Way 2-1-1. As part of the Sandy response and recovery work, a Housing Task Force was formed as a subgroup of the LTRWG, and is co-chaired by Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) and Department of Social Services (DSS).

Governor Malloy appointed me as the State Disaster Recovery Coordinator, with the two co-leaders of the LTRWG as my designated coordinators. We work closely with the FEMA Federal Disaster Recovery Coordinator on a variety of recovery functions, including identifying unmet needs, building community capacity, natural and cultural resources, and housing.

In the immediate aftermath of Super Storm Sandy, Governor Malloy requested and received a Presidential major disaster declaration, which provided FEMA Individual Assistance and Public Assistance disaster funding, as well as Small Business

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Administration (SBA) loans for businesses and homeowners. This major disaster declaration is one of five open Presidential disasters currently being administered by DEMHS/DESPP. As of May 2, 2013, over 12,450 individuals have registered for assistance from Sandy. Over \$13.7 million in FEMA individual assistance payments have been made. On the Public Assistance side, we anticipate approximately \$57 million in FEMA reimbursements to municipalities, state agencies, and eligible private non-profit organizations. To date, SBA has provided over \$43 million in loans, with over \$6.7 million to businesses and over \$36.5 million to homeowners.

Another source of FEMA funding is the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP), which is anticipated to provide approximately \$9 million in mitigation funding for Sandy to the State of Connecticut. Under HMGP, municipalities can apply for assistance in buying out or elevating properties. HMGP funds are also being used to provide generators for key facilities across the state.

To date, the state has received more than \$367 million in federal disaster assistance for Super Storm Sandy.

At the direction of the Governor's Office, I have convened a Storm Sandy Interagency Recovery Coordination Group to coordinate resource opportunities, manage outreach, and bring agencies to the table to support the recovery effort. It is essential that we work together to identify unmet needs, pool our resources, and ensure that we are not duplicating funding, because federal funding may be de-obligated if there has been a duplication of benefits. This interagency initiative includes: DEMHS, DECD, Department of Insurance, Department of Social Services, Department of Education, Department of Transportation, Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, Department of Public Health, Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, Department of Labor, Office of Policy and Management, Red Cross, and United Way 2-1-1.

The CDBG funding that this is the subject of the Department of Housing Allocation Plan is another source of recovery assistance. The State's allocation planning process has been coordinated through a collaborative effort of local, state, federal and private sector partners. On March 1, 2013, in anticipation of the release of the Federal Register Notice for the initial allocation of the CDBG-DR funding, DEMHS sent a notice to the Municipal Chief Executive Officers (MCEO), Service Chiefs, and Emergency Management Directors of the municipalities affected by Storm Sandy.

The notice advised of the forthcoming availability of federal funding to address Disaster Recovery. It also requested that those affected submit information regarding unmet

housing and economic development needs resulting from Hurricane Sandy as well as recommendations for possible expenditures. The Notice stated that this information would assist the state in preparing the Action Plan that would describe the states use of the Disaster Recovery funding. The unmet needs and recommendations for expenditure were to be forwarded to the DEMHS Regional Coordinators/ Planners.

In an effort to collect consistent data on the unmet needs, on March 13, 2013, a survey form was prepared and forwarded to the same entities that received the March 1st Notice. All responses to the unmet needs, recommendations and survey forms were required to be submitted by close of business on March 26, 2013.

Working with the DEMHS Regional Coordinators, DECD and the Department of Housing then conducted five informational meetings to provide an overview of the process, answer questions and to solicit input into the development of the Allocation Plan. The five meetings were held as follows: March 13, 2013 in Milford, March 14, 2013 in Meriden, March 15, 2013 in Middletown, March 18, 2013 in Westport, and March 18, 2013 in Norwich. The meeting locations were in each of the four eligible counties as identified by HUD and the meeting held in Meriden was specifically to obtain input from and respond to questions from public housing authorities in the eligible areas.

DEMHS continues to work closely with its local, state, federal, and private sector partners to coordinate Sandy recovery activities, as well as to prepare and plan for the next inevitable event.