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*Testimony Regarding*  
**Official Comment of the City of New Haven**  
**Hurricane Sandy Relief & CDBG-R Program**  
*Submitted by*  
**Rebecca Bombero, Legislative Director**  
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The City of New Haven, as a result of Hurricane Sandy, has experienced significant damage to its public infrastructure in each of its coastal neighborhoods. Given the amount of critical infrastructure work that remains unaddressed in New Haven and throughout the region, I strongly urge you to reallocate funding from other line items to increase public infrastructure investment.

While I appreciate the State's commitment to residential reconstruction efforts in Tranch 1 of the above-referenced program, I understand that more than 50 projects, totaling \$151 million in unmet needs, have been identified to fund various repair, restore and rehabilitate infrastructure requests from municipalities. In New Haven alone, for instance, we face numerous challenges that require immediate attention:

- On Long Wharf, the Vietnam Veterans Long Wharf Memorial Park remains substantially compromised, unusable in certain sections and at risk of further damage absent immediate repair and stabilization of the shoreline. In addition, the park is adjacent to ongoing construction of Interstate 95 which must proceed on schedule in concert with Connecticut DOT design efforts.
- A drainage/sewer emergency exists with any amount of stormwater on Union Ave. Union Station (the State's most active Amtrak station and third busiest commuter station), Church Street South (a 300-unit low income housing complex), and the City's Department of Police Services all are located on Union Avenue and have experienced flooding due to the low-lying nature of the area and tidal influences which compromise the overall drainage shed. These assets not only provide important public services, by virtue of their proximity to New Haven's central business district and Yale-New Haven Hospital, they serve as the foundation for the City's vitality and economic redevelopment efforts in that area.
- Two essential seawall sites are now dangerously exposed to the elements and have placed huge swaths of our East Shore in extreme jeopardy. The Morris Cove Seawall, for example, provides protection for over 300 residents and infrastructure, including Tweed airport and the Brewery Square site on the Quinnipiac River.

New Haven has an aged infrastructure put into place many years ago, and 40% of our coastline consists of public space. Unfortunately, there are never enough funds from the City's property tax base to mitigate problems that the recent spate of storms has only aggravated. While FEMA disaster reimbursements have been of great help, the local match of 25% continues to be an issue for us.

It is our understanding that "the intended focus of these funds is infrastructure and infrastructure related projects." Therefore, we respectfully request that the budget line item for infrastructure in CDBG Tranch 2 be increased dramatically.

In addition, the City would like to see the include specific project directly related to mitigation of disaster related activity in targeted areas of the City of New Haven. These projects are required to stabilize the existing economic and environmental conditions within the area. As stated in the Action Plan, Hurricane Sandy caused significant damage to multifamily housing developments New Haven County, which lead to our identifying significant degradation of our infrastructure in neighborhoods that had for many years posed manageable challenges with regard to flooding and water mitigation. In the aftermath of the storm, we cannot manage and have learned those properties in the 100 and 500 year flood plain need to be elevated and rehabilitated.

The City of New Haven leads the county in meeting and exceeding LMI requirements outlined in HUD's guidelines for CDBG- Disaster Funds. Both projects fall within HUD designated low moderate income area. The City of New Haven is proposing the Redevelopment of Union Ave/Church Street South and Mill River Abatement and Storm Water Management System be included in the Action Plan and specified as priority projects similar to those outlined for (page 47 Action Plan) for Fairfield County.

Union Avenue/Church Street South Redevelopment (Census Tract: 9140500)

This redevelopment would include drainage and sub surface improvements to include constructing a new outlet, pump station and/or alternative system improvements including a pressure conduit to supplement the existing outfalls and increase the ability of the system to achieve protection for a 10-year frequency storm event. In order to complete this task, the City will be required to develop and implement a new development project on the current Church Street South site directly adjacent to Union Station. This development project would include a comprehensive redevelopment of an existing 300 unit Section 8 housing complex. The work included in Phase I of the development would result in relocation of approximately 150 families into a non-impacted area. This is consistent with the Hill-to-Downtown Community Plan recently completed through support of a HUD Challenge Grant

Costs are estimated at:

Demolition Impacted Property	\$2,500,000
Relocation Assistance/Site Remediation	\$5,000,000
Reconstruction/Rehabilitation of Public Units	\$2,500,000
Union Avenue Storm Water Mitigation	\$10,000,000

This project would create more than 750 new units of housing and mitigate storm water challenges currently impeding the economic stability and revitalization of Union Station, Church Street South and New Haven's economic impact on the region.

River Street Storm Mitigation (Census Tract 9142300)

The core improvements associated with this project are the reconstruction of River Street and the construction of shoreline stabilization. River Street is a critical collector through an industrial area and viability is contingents upon the proposed improvements. The city is seeking to reconstruct the roadway, remove the obsolete railroad tracks, improve drainage system and make appropriate horizontal and vertical geometric improvements at the intersections.

It is anticipated that the project will include separation of a portion of the sewer system consistent with the citywide sewer separation project. This improved system along River Street will address local drainage issues with construction of a new storm drainage system. The proposed River Street Storm Drainage Improvements will serve to enhance the revitalization of the River Street residential and light industrial projects underway as a broader effort to stabilize the Mill River and Fair Haven Districts.

These improvements will directly impact the redevelopment of Farnum Courts, a public housing complex underway in the Mill River neighborhood. A total of 400 new units are under-development and designed in collaboration with the River Street Municipal Development Plan to encourage local business and economic growth in the neighborhood.

Costs are estimated at:

Abatement of Environmental Conditions	\$1,000,000
Installation of Bulkheads and Storm Water Management Systems	\$4,000,000

We are requesting an addition to the State's Action Plan to include these priority projects for New Haven County. Based on the eligibility requirements as outlined by HUD, we are assured the City will meet the required timelines and compliance standards identified in HUD's allocation of CDBG-Disaster Program Funds to the State.

We urge your consideration of our suggestions and requests.