

# Governor Christie Requests 100% Federal Reimbursement for Costs of Emergency Protective Measures and Ongoing Debris Removal in Hard-Hit Communities

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## *Waiver to Provide Additional Federal Assistance Necessary to Continue Essential Debris Removal Operations and Emergency Protective Measures*

**Trenton, NJ** - Governor Chris Christie today announced that he has formally requested federal approval of 100% reimbursement for state and local government costs associated with debris removal and emergency protective measures that continue in the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy. In a letter to Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Administrator Craig Fugate, Governor Christie stated that the financial and economic hardships brought by the storm and its associated clean up burden have become untenable for the state and communities alike. To offer relief and ensure that these priority operations continue in hard-hit communities across New Jersey, the Governor requested that FEMA exercise its broad authority to implement 100% federal assistance for these costs for a period of at least 90 days.

"I have been highly supportive of the federal government's immediate efforts in response to Hurricane Sandy, but it has become clear that the financial burden and economic hardship still confronted by our state and communities threatens the ability to continue debris removal operations at the existing cost-share ratio," said Governor Christie. "Any slowing of progress in continuing these essential operations in our communities puts in jeopardy a timely rehabilitation of our shore areas, relief from economic distress, and the removal of threats to the public health and safety. For these reasons, I am requesting that the federal government exercise its discretion to grant relief to New Jersey state and local governments with 100 percent federal reimbursement for categories A & B assistance for a period of no fewer than 90 days."

There exists ample precedent for New Jersey's request, including prior instances where FEMA has similarly granted extraordinary cost-share in Categories A, emergency protective measures, and B, debris removal, for periods extending up to 319 days. These instances include but are not limited to:

The State of Texas received 100 percent federal cost-share for debris removal for six months after Hurricane Ike in 2008, and 100 percent cost-share for emergency protective measures for thirty days;

In the wake of Hurricane Rita, Texas received Category A & B assistance at 100 percent federal reimbursement for 244 days; and

Louisiana received Category A & B federal cost-share after Hurricane Ike for 44 days.

For the state impacted by Hurricane Katrina - the most comparable disaster to that which occurred in New Jersey when Sandy impacted our state - 100 percent federal funding was approved for Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama for as long as 319 days.

"Because of the central importance of tourism to our Shore economies, it is critical that communities be as ready as possible to accept visitors in the upcoming tourism season," continued Governor Christie. "A waiver of the non-federal cost-share for Category A & B assistance - which accounts for the bulk of locally accrued financial commitments related to this disaster - is necessary at this moment to successfully reopen the Jersey Shore in time for Memorial Day in 2013."

A PDF copy of Governor Christie's request to Administrator Fugate can be found attached to this release.

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