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WASHINGTON, DC 20510-1501
(202) 224-3744
e-mail: grassley.senate.gov/contact.cfm
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210 WALNUT STREET
DES MOINES, IA 50309-2140
(515) 288-1145
- 150 1ST AVENUE NE
SUITE 325
CEDAR RAPIDS, IA 52401
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(563) 322-4331
- 307 FEDERAL BUILDING
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(712) 322-7103

United States Senate

CHARLES E. GRASSLEY

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-1501

July 23, 2009

VIA FAX

The Honorable W. Craig Fugate
Administrator
Federal Emergency Management Agency
500 C Street SW
Washington, DC 20472

Dear Administrator Fugate,

More than a year after the historically devastating tornadoes and floods, Iowans are still trying to put their lives back together. Communities throughout the state continue to work with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) on various applications and paperwork related to flood mitigation. The individuals affected by the floods in these applications remain in a holding pattern.

While I realize that the federal disaster application process takes time and it is necessary to verify the data; cities and counties have worked diligently to submit the buyout applications and provide the correct information to FEMA based on the instructions that they receive through the joint field office. It is very frustrating and disheartening that FEMA continues to struggle with communication issues and methodology to carry out the basic programs of the agency.

We are now learning that there are problems with methodology that was used for cost-benefit analysis in these applications. It is my understanding that the applications would have been submitted with the correct data, based on the training that city and county personnel received from contractors of FEMA in September 2008. However, in November, cities and counties received notice from the joint field office that FEMA had changed the methodology for the buyout applications. In fact, some cities even questioned the change in methodology, but were assured that FEMA had changed the process. It is highly unfortunate that applications are now being questioned because they did not use the original methodology from FEMA Region VII. The information provided in these applications cannot be considered under the original methodology because the data is not sufficient.

RANKING MEMBER,
FINANCE

Committee Assignments:

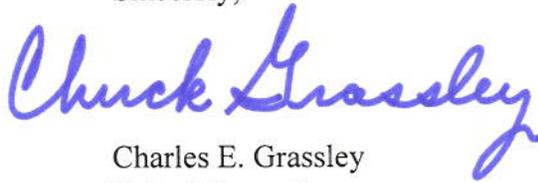
BUDGET
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CO-CHAIRMAN,
INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS
CONTROL CAUCUS

Disaster recovery is complicated enough without adding conflicting information and instructions from various levels of FEMA. This is only one of many instances throughout the past year where folks in Iowa have received conflicting information from the various levels. People count on FEMA to help them get through some of the toughest times. Conflicting information and miscommunication will not help my constituents rebuild their lives.

I would appreciate your time and attention to this matter so Iowans and others affected by these disasters will not continue to suffer because of decisions made by FEMA. Please inform me of the steps you will take to alleviate the problem the agency has caused for Iowa communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Chuck Grassley". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Charles E. Grassley
United States Senator