

Washington, D.C. – After sending a letter to President Obama calling for a Presidential Disaster Declaration for seven Minnesota counties that suffered severe storm damage, U.S. Senators Amy Klobuchar and Al Franken and Representatives Jim Oberstar, Collin Peterson and Tim Walz announced today the President has responded and declared a major disaster for Faribault, Freeborn, Olmsted, Otter Tail, Polk, Steele, and Wadena Counties. The storms caused thousands of acres of crop damage and other agricultural losses, as well as widespread damage to public facilities and infrastructure. Over 800 homes were damaged, including more than 100 that were completely destroyed.

“These communities have shown tremendous courage and resilience since the storms tore through their towns,” Klobuchar said. “But at times like these, local communities should not have to go it alone. The federal government has an essential role to play in supporting the recovery effort, and today’s announcement will allow us to be able to deliver that help quickly.”

“I am pleased that today President Obama has responded to our request and the needs of seven Minnesota Counties who were hit hard by recent tornadoes,” Senator Franken said. “This declaration will help make sure that Minnesota has the resources it needs to repair the damage done to public infrastructure, and make replacements where necessary. I will push to get this assistance to these Minnesota communities as quickly as possible.”

“I am pleased that the President took action on this request in short order,” said Congressman Oberstar. “The fast response by FEMA and state officials is helping to ensure that we get assistance to those who need it.”

“I appreciate the President’s prompt attention to this serious situation,” Congressman Peterson said. “Many parts of our state have seen tremendous damage to homes, land and public infrastructure. While damage assessments are ongoing, this is an important step in the recovery process.”

“I’m pleased that the President moved so quickly to send aid to Minnesota communities that sustained the most severe storm damage during June,” said Congressman Walz. “We are still in the early stages of the recovery process and as we move forward I am committed to ensuring that the federal government moves as quickly as possible to help communities get back on their feet.”

The letter sent by the congressional members followed an official submission for assistance by Governor Pawlenty.

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****NOTE:** As of July 26, 2010 the major disaster declaration for the State of Minnesota, FEMA-1921-DR

has been amended to designate Blue Earth, Brown, Houston, Kittson, Nicollet, and Sibley Counties for the Public Assistance program. The original declaration included Faribault, Freeborn, Olmsted, Otter Tail, Polk, Steele, and Wadena Counties.

