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GOVERNOR • STATE OF OHIO

Communication Department

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KASICH ASKS PRESIDENT OBAMA FOR A PRESIDENTIAL DISASTER DECLARATION FOR CLERMONT COUNTY

Asks for an Expedited Answer to Provide Maximum Possible Relief

COLUMBUS – Today Governor John R. Kasich asked President Barack Obama to issue a Presidential Disaster Declaration for Clermont County so that the maximum level of federal relief can quickly begin flowing to families hard-hit by last Friday’s storms.

Kasich asked the President to approve the request by Monday, or at the same time as the requests from other states impacted by the storm, so that relief can begin flowing as soon as possible. Kasich wrote that if the President didn’t decide by Monday that, in order to see relief flowing as soon as possible, he would have to withdraw his request and resubmit a request for disaster assistance from the Small Business Administration. SBA relief is less generous than that provided through a Presidential Disaster Declaration, but Ohio’s degree of damage likely already qualifies for it so it could begin flowing relatively quickly.

In his letter, Kasich wrote:

“While the level of damage sustained in this disaster may fall below the levels sustained by Kentucky and Indiana, the significant shortage of housing alternatives creates a unique need that cannot be solved without supplemental Federal assistance. This need is, in fact, so acute that I ask you to approve Ohio’s request as quickly as possible in order for impacted families to begin receiving Federal aid as quickly as possible.

“If an answer to my request cannot be made by Monday, March 12, or on the same timeframe as requests from other states impacted by this storm, out of a desire to see impacted families begin receiving essential assistance as quickly as possible, I will withdraw this request and, instead, seek other Federal assistance, such as that available from the Small Business Administration, for which I believe Ohio already qualifies. Though less significant, assistance from SBA programs would be able to be provided relatively quickly.

“Hopefully your response to my request will be positive. If not, however, I hope that you and your Administration will still consider the concern I raised to U.S. Department of Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano by phone on Saturday and again on Tuesday that every effort needed to be made—outside of the lines of existing Federal programs if necessary—to find alternative, innovative ways to meet Clermont County’s severe housing crisis. There is always a way to solve a problem if we put our heads together and are willing to think outside the box.”

If the President issues a federal disaster declaration for Ohio, disaster assistance loans and grants would be available to eligible individuals. On Saturday Kasich inspected the damage in Southern Ohio and declared a State of Emergency in Clermont County, which allowed Ohio Department of Transportation clean-up crews to assist local officials with debris removal. On Monday Kasich called in the Ohio National Guard to assist with clean-up to expedite the recovery, and asked for federal inspectors to determine if families were available for additional federal disaster relief benefits. On Tuesday Kasich activated state relief funds for low-income families and local governments.

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