

**Downed trees and debris hindering power restoration on Long Island
Rep. Israel asks for an "all hands on deck" approach to turn on the lights**

Hauppauge, NY – On Tuesday, Rep. Steve Israel (D – Huntington) asked Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Administrator Craig Fugate to task the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to assist with debris removal on Long Island. Downed trees and other debris are causing lingering power outages for hundreds of thousands of Long Islanders.

"Hurricane Irene took down our trees and turned out our lights. Now we need an 'all hands on deck' approach to restore power to hundreds of thousands of Long Islanders. I've asked FEMA and the Army Corps to help with debris removal so we can get the lights back on as quickly as possible," said Rep. Israel.

As of mid-day Tuesday, 270,000 Long Island Power Authority (LIPA) customers were without power and LIPA increased their estimate to 3,000 significant damage locations. Under the Emergency Declaration currently in effect for New York, FEMA has the authority to task the Army Corps to assist with debris removal.

The full text of Rep. Israel's letter to Administrator Fugate is below.

August 30, 2011

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

As you know, Hurricane Irene has claimed many lives, caused billions of dollars in damage and

economic loss, and left millions of Americans without power. On Long Island, the heavy rain that fell on already-saturated ground combined with strong winds to topple trees and knock out power for hundreds of thousands of Long Islanders. More than 270,000 Long Island residents remain without power, and downed trees have proven to be a significant impediment for crews that are working around the clock to get electricity restored.

Under the Emergency Declaration currently in effect for New York, FEMA has the authority to task the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to assist in debris removal. FEMA should exercise this authority immediately. Restoring power quickly will help protect lives, allow businesses to reopen their doors, and get workers back on the job. FEMA should do all it can to make this happen.

Thank you for your leadership in the preparation and recovery efforts associated with Hurricane Irene. I look forward to your prompt response.

Sincerely,

Steve Israel
Member of Congress