

Rep. Israel, Leg. Wink, Supervisor Petrone, Mayor Serota and Commissioner Forman launch Sandy Relief Transparency Working Group

Melville, NY—Today, Congressman Steve Israel (D-Huntington) joined Nassau County Legislator Wayne Wink, Huntington Supervisor Frank Petrone, Port Washington-Manhasset OEM Commissioner Peter Forman, and Brookville Mayor Daniel Serota to launch the Sandy Relief Transparency Working Group to ensure there is transparency with Hurricane Sandy recovery funding and that the resources are distributed locally. The group is pushing for a clearinghouse of information on specific projects that Hurricane Sandy relief funding is directed towards on the ground.

Rep. Israel said, “The Sandy Recovery bill represents long overdue relief for my constituents and communities across New York. The homeowners and businesses that I represent have already gone through so much, but it’s time to make certain this recovery is bold and implemented quickly. That includes having an open and transparent process so taxpayers and municipalities can see exactly how funds are being spent to rebuild and protect their communities.”

Rep. Israel wrote to U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Secretary Shaun Donovan, who chairs the Hurricane Sandy Rebuilding Task Force, to urge him to launch a website and post information on how all federal funding for Sandy relief is distributed. By making this information publicly available, the website will allow local municipalities to make certain that resources are being used for the highest priority community rebuilding projects.

Nassau County Legislator Wayne Wink said, “In the aftermath of the worst storm in modern Long Island history, the needs of so many of our residents remain unmet. It is incumbent upon all of us to ensure the swift and efficient delivery of recovery monies to the rightful recipients. I look forward to working with Congressman Israel to bring transparency to this process and help restore our local economy.”

Supervisor Frank Petrone said, “Hurricane Sandy was the super storm that all emergency professionals were wary of. The storm that tested the resolve of emergency personnel and systems alike. Now we have to reassure our communities that the funds that come from Washington are going to the projects identified by local officials and leaders in the community. It

is a pleasure for me to join Congressman Israel and this distinguished Working Group to ensure that these funds bring our communities back to pre-Sandy conditions and where needed, protection for the future through a comprehensive mitigation plan.”

Port Washington-Manhasset OEM Commissioner Peter Forman said, “I look forward to being part of a team and a process to oversee and assure that these significant sums of money are used as intended by Congress, as expected by taxpayers, and in the most meaningful ways for the benefit of the recipients.”

On January 15, 2013, the House of Representatives passed H.R. 152 to provide more than \$50 billion emergency federal relief to areas hardest hit by Hurricane Sandy. The Senate passed this bill Monday and was signed into law by the President last night. The bill allows for the Small Business Administration to offer direct loans to small businesses trying to get back on their feet, FEMA to provide support to families that lost everything, rebuild critical infrastructure with transportation projects and support Army Corps projects to restore our coastal communities. A comprehensive summary of the Sandy Relief funding bill is on Rep. Israel’s website at www.Israel.house.gov/Sandy.

The Sandy Relief Transparency Working Group will track recovery efforts closely. By having a clearinghouse of information on Sandy recovery funding online, the public and localities can track resources. Similarly, after enactment of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, the Recovery Accountability and Transparency Board created and maintained a website “to foster greater accountability and transparency in the use of funds made available in this Act.” The site provided taxpayers with user-friendly access and the ability track how and funds were spent.

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