

# SANDY AND ITS IMPACTS: A LOCAL PERSPECTIVE

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HEARING  
BEFORE THE  
COMMITTEE ON  
ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS  
UNITED STATES SENATE  
ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH CONGRESS  
SECOND SESSION

NOVEMBER 29, 2012

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COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH CONGRESS  
SECOND SESSION

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# C O N T E N T S

Page

## NOVEMBER 29, 2012

### OPENING STATEMENTS

Boxer, Hon. Barbara, U.S. Senator from the State of California .....	1
Vitter, Hon. David, U.S. Senator from the State of Louisiana .....	2
Carper, Hon. Thomas R., U.S. Senator from the State of Delaware .....	3
Cardin, Hon. Benjamin L., U.S. Senator from the State of Maryland .....	6
Lautenberg, Hon. Frank R., U.S. Senator from the State of New Jersey .....	9
Whitehouse, Hon. Sheldon, U.S. Senator from the State of Rhode Island .....	11
Gillibrand, Hon. Kirsten, U.S. Senator from the State of New York .....	14
Inhofe, Hon. James M., U.S. Senator from the State of Oklahoma, prepared statement .....	44

### WITNESSES

Reed, Hon. Jack, U.S. Senator from the State of Rhode Island .....	17
Schumer, Hon. Charles E., U.S. Senator from the State of New York .....	20
Menendez, Hon. Robert, U.S. Senator from the State of New Jersey .....	24
Blumenthal, Hon. Richard, U.S. Senator from the State of Connecticut .....	28
Pallone, Hon. Frank, Jr., U.S. Representative from the State of New Jersey ...	31
Langevin, Hon. Jim, U.S. Representative from the State of Rhode Island .....	33
Bishop, Hon. Timothy, U.S. Representative from the State of New York .....	33
Cicilline, Hon. David, U.S. Representative from the State of Rhode Island .....	35
Holt, Hon. Rush, U.S. Representative from the State of New Jersey .....	36
Harris, Hon. Andy, U.S. Representative from the State of Maryland .....	37
Pascarella, Hon. Bill, Jr., U.S. Representative from the State of New Jersey .....	38
Engel, Hon. Eliot, U.S. Representative from the State of New York .....	39
Grimm, Hon. Michael, U.S. Representative from the State of New York .....	40
Courtney, Hon. Joe, U.S. Representative from the State of Connecticut .....	41
Smith, Hon. Chris, U.S. Representative from the State of New Jersey .....	43



## **SANDY AND ITS IMPACTS: A LOCAL PERSPECTIVE**

**THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 2012**

U.S. SENATE,  
COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS,  
*Washington, DC.*

The full Committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:30 a.m. in room 406, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Barbara Boxer (Chairman of the full Committee), presiding.

Present: Senators Boxer, Vitter, Carper, Lautenberg, Cardin, Whitehouse, and Gillibrand.

### **OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. BARBARA BOXER, U.S. SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

Senator BOXER. Good morning, everyone. We are here today to receive testimony from Members of Congress, Representatives and Senators, who represent communities that were the most impacted by the destruction left in the wake of Superstorm Sandy.

Many communities in the eastern half of our nation were devastated by Sandy. Countless homes were destroyed; more than 120 lost their lives. And as representatives of the people affected, I know that our witnesses today will give us clear and graphic testimony, so that we truly understand what extreme weather can do.

Now, certainly we know Senators Landrieu and Vitter brought it home to us in Katrina. But these events are happening more and more often, and we have to focus on what it means to our people.

Many of our fellow citizens have a long road ahead to rebuild their lives and their communities. We have a duty to be by their side during this difficult time in the months to come.

This hearing will create a record to this Committee, which has jurisdiction over flood control and other related issues. We will explore how we can prevent or mitigate such incredible destruction in future extreme weather events as we take up the WRDA bill.

There is a photo we have, I believe, from NASA. It illustrates why Superstorm Sandy is ranked as one of the worst natural disasters to ever hit our nation and how it caused such widespread destruction. Stretching from Maine to the Gulf States, Sandy brought a life threatening storm surge along the Mid-Atlantic coast and areas northward, including a surge of up to 11 feet in the Long Island Sound. The massive storm's maximum sustained winds were 90 miles per hour, with hurricane force winds extending outward approximately 175 miles from the center and tropical storm force winds extending outwards approximately 485 miles.

According to FEMA, Superstorm Sandy's wind, storm surges and flooding hit 12 States. More than 8 million people lost power. Transportation systems in New York, Philadelphia, Boston, and Washington, DC, shut down, and over 12,000 commercial flights were halted. Communities up and down the coast were battered.

The Federal Government has a responsibility to help in the recovery effort. Initial estimates from New York and New Jersey alone of disaster assistance total more than \$70 billion, a staggering number.

Sandy demonstrates clearly why it is so important to move forward with our WRDA bill. I have been working with Senator Vitter in particular, who will become the new Ranking Member, of course, Senator Inhofe as well, and all of my colleagues, to make sure we can move forward and authorize critical flood control infrastructure right now. Because we now have a ban on earmarks, it has confused the way we can write this bill. But we have figured it out, working together, how we can get the Corps authorized to move forward.

There is a new title in our draft WRDA legislation, and we call it Extreme Weather and Disaster Mitigation, which will help us to better prepare and reduce risks, whether those risks are in the Northeast or in Louisiana or in inland States or on the West Coast. Because they are everywhere.

More frequent extreme weather events have become a reality, as our climate continues to change. We have to build infrastructure needed to protect our people, our communities, and our economy. Following Superstorm Sandy, Governor Cuomo stated, "Part of learning from this is the recognition that climate change is a reality, extreme weather is a reality. It is a reality and we are vulnerable."

I wanted to state this is just a little bit of a different hearing this morning. Because we are really basically making a record, and I was going to call on Senator Inhofe. I don't know if he is on his way, but he is not at this time. So what we are going to do is hear from, first of all, our own colleagues on this Committee who experienced real problems from the storm. So we are going to give Senator Carper—I am sorry? Senator Vitter, did you want to make an opening statement in lieu of Senator Inhofe? Go right ahead.

**OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. DAVID VITTER,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF LOUISIANA**

Senator VITTER. I will be very brief, particularly since I may have to leave when the hearing is still proceeding. But I wanted to be here for three reasons. First of all, to express our strong support for all of the victims of Sandy, for our colleagues who are directly affected, and to commit to work with them on their clear and immediate needs. I know there are a lot there.

Second, to hear what some of those major needs are, besides the obvious FEMA recovery effort, which is ongoing, particularly the flood and storm protection needs. And third, to begin to explore together ways we can expedite that process. After Katrina, because Katrina was so big, we expedited a lot of Corps requirements, NEPA and other requirements, both through congressional action and executive order. And it absolutely made a critical difference,

and there was no negative environmental impact that has been noted or documented in any way.

I think we need to learn that lesson for Sandy. I think we need to learn the lesson more broadly and see how we can reasonably expedite important action on an ongoing basis. I look forward to working with all my colleagues on that.

Senator BOXER. Senator, I am very pleased that as you know, we have this new section of our bill that does deal with exactly that. We have been working very closely with your staff because you are right, we cannot have a halt to fixing our problems when there are 10 different laws that they have to comply with. So we need to streamline that.

So here is what we are going to do. We are going to hear from Senator Carper for 10 minutes, Senator Lautenberg, if he is here, for 10 minutes, Senator Cardin for 10 minutes, Senator Whitehouse for 10 minutes, Senator Gillibrand for 10 minutes. So our Committee clearly had—so many of our members have felt the impact of this superstorm.

So let's start with you, Senator Carper.

**OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. THOMAS R. CARPER,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF DELAWARE**

Senator CARPER. Madam Chair, thanks very, very much to you and to our colleagues, and to members of our staffs for holding this hearing this morning, and for giving us an opportunity to share with all of you some of what we have been through.

Massive impacts of Hurricane Sandy continue to be felt by many people up and down the East Coast and to the Northeast. The images of destruction have been heartbreaking to witness in my State and certainly in other States, especially to the north of us. As I have traveled through Delaware, during the storm and after the storm, I have seen that aftermath first hand, and we still see it.

I also saw people, though, from all walks of life, pulling together, helping one another and taking care of one another, their neighbors. I am grateful for the opportunity to share with all of you some of what I have seen in our State since Hurricane Sandy came calling.

Perhaps most importantly, this hearing will help Congress to understand what we must do to help our States come back stronger and to better protect us from other storms in the future.

A while back, I was talking to with a good friend of mine, and I asked how he was doing. His response was, "Compared to what?" And that is really a good way to look at how Sandy has affected us in Delaware—compared to our neighbors to the north, we are doing OK. But Sandy didn't spare Delaware by any measure. And we have real needs that are beyond our State's ability to provide.

From the moment it was clear that we were in the storm's path, I have been grateful for the work of Governor Jack Markel and his entire team. State, county, local officials, first responders, American Red Cross, Delaware National Guard, State police, utilities, many volunteers, all helped to protect Delaware's residents and businesses from the storm as it approached and until well after it had passed.

President Obama, FEMA, the rest of the Administration's team also offered their terrific response, working hand in glove with our State team. In this case, there was really a team. And as I like to say, there is no "I" in the word team.

I should add that the Army Corps of Engineers has been particularly helpful in preparing us for and responding to Hurricane Sandy. Over the years, funded by a combination of State and Federal dollars, the Corps has built a series of storm protection projects in Delaware, in the southwest, and in Maryland, but wide, robust beaches and a strong, healthy dune system. These types of projects have been criticized at times by some, unfairly in my opinion, because they performed exceptionally well during Sandy, likely sparing us hundreds of millions, maybe billions of dollars in damages.

Natural protection, like these beaches, withstand storm surge and sand better than dykes or seawalls, while also enhancing the environment. Although the Corps' projects on our coast did their job, they were weakened by this storm and now require repairs so that we are not vulnerable to future storms.

Unfortunately, the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic are expected to see more frequent and larger storms like Sandy in the future. That is why we need to find cost effective ways to ensure that such projects will continue to protect lives and property.

We also need to look into other adaptive measures. Wetlands, oyster beds, and seagrass, they are cost effective and can be sustained for years to come. We can also get better results for less money if we allow States more flexibility in managing sand from different sources along their shorelines as a complete sediment system instead of as an individual project. This strategy is called regional sediment management, and is one that I think deserves more attention.

Madam Chair and colleagues, I think you have included some of these strategies in your draft water resources bill, which I appreciate, and I hope we can address that later this year. Unfortunately, other areas of Delaware weren't as well protected and saw significant damage. I want to take a look at some photos. The first photo, this is a new bridge over the Indian River Inlet. The Indian River Inlet connects the Atlantic Ocean to the inland bays of Delaware. That is a new bridge; we spent over \$200 million on that bridge in the last several years. A lot of Federal money, quite a bit of State money.

This is the old bridge. It disappeared. It is gone. These are the highway approaches to the old bridge. They are gone. Four months ago, that was how people made their way up and down the East Coast, over State Route 1. Today, that bridge is completely gone, along with the highway approaches.

And this new bridge, the approaches to the new bridge are threatened. We want to make sure, having made a \$200 million investment of Federal and State moneys, that we don't lose the bridge. I am told the bridge could actually work underwater. Unfortunately, you can't get to the bridge if it is underwater. And the beaches that used to be over here to the east to protect the beaches and dunes that used to be there to protect the highway approaches to the bridge are gone. And they need to be replaced.

In addition, a huge breach—travel up, if you will, travel up the road to the Delaware Bay toward the Delaware River. I want us to take a look at a couple of other photos. But just north of a town called Lewes, some of you have been to Lewes, beautiful town just north of Rehoboth, we have a huge, 10,000-acre-plus national wildlife refuge. It is called Prime Hook. And it is an important and maybe irreplaceable part of the migratory flyway and one of the only places in the world where horseshoe crabs come ashore to spawn and to leave their eggs.

Severe dune breaches—on the right of this photo, that is the Atlantic Ocean, or the Delaware Bay. This is the Prime Hook Refuge; it is a big refuge. And that is a modest breach in the dune system which allows the ocean, if you will, to come into the refuge.

Let's look at the next picture. This is that same refuge, Prime Hook Refuge, the top part of the picture. This is that dune breach. What used to be a wildlife refuge is now becoming a lake. Water has surged through the expanded dune breaches, and is turning a freshwater refuge into a saltwater marsh.

There used to be a road that went through there and connected the western part of our State to the shore communities. That is the road today.

We have also experienced widespread damage to stormwater systems throughout our State, dykes, dams, as far north as Delaware City and Newcastle. Roads and bridges in various parts of our State have been damaged or washed out and will need to be repaired or replaced. Meanwhile, we continue to work with FEMA, with DEMA and localities and other agencies to determine the full extent of the damage.

Delaware and its local jurisdictions already have contributed a large amount of resources in a very short period of time to prepare for and respond to this storm, and to begin rebuilding in its wake. Preliminary damage assessments show that more will be required, and given an already strained State budget environment, Delaware will need help in filling in the gaps in funding, much as the Gulf Coast States needed following Katrina.

Madam Chair and colleagues, to you and our other colleagues, I just want to say thanks for the chance to share some of this with you today, to let you know about some of the impacts of the storm on our State. In Delaware, we have a long tradition of helping our neighbors, whether they live down the street or well beyond our borders. For years, we have helped other sister States that have suffered from disasters, be they hurricanes, be they tornadoes or floods, or wildfires.

Today, the shoe is on the other foot. We need the help of our neighbors, not just in Delaware, not just on DelMarVa, but all across the country. Just as we have been there for them in their hour of need, we hope that they will be there now for us, for Maryland, for New Jersey, for New York and other hard hit States as well. Those of us in Delaware look forward to working with all of you, and with the Obama administration, to enable us to recover and rebuild as well as to better protect ourselves from the ravages of future storms that are likely to come our way.

Thanks so much.

Senator BOXER. Thank you very much, Senator.

Senator Cardin.

**OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. BENJAMIN L. CARDIN,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF MARYLAND**

Senator CARDIN. Thank you, Madam Chair.

First, let me ask consent that my entire statement be included in the record.

Senator BOXER. Without objection.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you so much, not just for convening this hearing, but for your leadership in dealing with these issues, not only in responding to the needs of the communities and individuals who are impacted by the severe weather events, but your leadership in directing this Committee to look at ways in which we can make our communities less vulnerable.

Sandy was a devastating storm; 80 lives lost as a result of the storm, 7 in my State of Maryland. Eight million people on the East Coast of the United States were at some time without power as a result of Sandy.

Maryland fared much better than our surrounding States. We sent a lot of our resources to help our friends in New York and New Jersey and other States that were impacted. But it was a severe storm for the people of Maryland. The amount of high sustained winds was unprecedented in our State. Seventy mile an hour winds were hour upon hour upon hour doing incredible damage to our State.

Heavy rains, we had record number of amount of rains from the storm, 9 inches in our coastal areas. That caused extreme coastal flooding. The storm surges were severe, and the waves were as high as 7 feet.

I want to talk specifically about two regions of our State in which the people today are still trying to recover from the severity of this storm. One is Western Maryland. While we were experiencing 9 inches of rain on the east coast of Maryland, on the western part of our State, in the Appalachians, they had this blizzard that occurred that dumped 30 inches of wet snow.

Talk about one county, Garrett County. Garrett County is a county located in Appalachia, somewhat remote, in the mountains. Total population of 30,000 people. Fifteen thousand homes were without power. You can do a little bit of arithmetic; that is every home in that county. Three thousand trees were down in that county as a result of the storm. People living in remote areas, not easy to get to, without power, extremely vulnerable to their public safety.

Maryland devoted the Maryland National Guard, made it its top priority, 40 personnel, 26 Humvees, worked to save lives, and they did an incredible job. We are very grateful for their very heroic activities in saving lives and trying to bring people into a more normal existence.

At the other end of my State, on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, they suffered a different type of damage as a result for Sandy. As you know, the Eastern Shore is pretty flat, pretty much at sea level. When a storm like Sandy approaches, it causes severe flooding.

In Somerset County, the people of Crisfield were severely impacted with the loss of their homes, their businesses; the agricultural crops were ruined. And this is a very vulnerable community, Madam Chair, 32 percent of the people live below poverty. They don't have a lot of options. They don't have the resources to be able to take care of their needs without assistance from government. And I am very proud of the leadership of our State in trying to help those individuals and the entire team that worked on this.

Many of you are familiar with Worcester County, it is where Ocean City, Maryland, is located. Nine point eight percent of the population of Worcester County is below poverty, and they have twice the number on average of elderly that we have in our State. They were particularly impacted by this storm.

Thanks to the extraordinary leadership of Governor O'Malley, our Maryland Emergency Management Agency, MEMA, and the full partnership that they brought into being, including our State and local officials, we had extraordinary leadership from our county executive, the Maryland National Guard; I was with them throughout the storm, they deployed the people where they were needed, they worked around the clock, they saved lives.

I want to thank the Red Cross also; I had a chance to visit with them. They were there helping us, and as soon as we were stabilized, they moved on to the next community that could use their resources. We saw extraordinary efforts by our first responders and by ordinary citizens that helped save lives.

We had evacuations, in Queen Anne's County, Anne Arundel County, Harford County, Baltimore County, Baltimore City, people were evacuated from their homes. Forty-one shelters were established; 1,000 citizens were housed in these shelters.

The bottom line is that we can't handle this on our own. I just want to underscore the point that Senator Carper made, we as a nation have come together to communities that have been impacted by these types of events. We have used the Federal Government and its resources to help bring those communities back to where they need to be. We were very much in tune, as disasters have happened in all parts of our country, to be a good neighbor. We need help today.

I want to thank President Obama for the disaster declaration for Maryland that allowed FEMA to be available for public assistance. We have a request in for individual disaster assistance for the individuals who are impacted. That proposal is still pending. I am going to be working with Governor O'Malley to make sure that the individuals who have been impacted by this storm have as strong a partner from the Federal Government as we can possibly have.

Madam Chair, I think it is going to be highly likely that we are going to have to pass a supplemental emergency appropriation bill. I know that is not in this Committee, but I do point out that we have to make sure that the resources are available. Congress will shortly be adjourning; I hope that we will pay attention to that during this session of Congress to make sure that the Federal agencies have the resources they need to be able to deal with the consequences of Hurricane Sandy.

From this Committee's point of view, we need to take a look at the environmental impacts. There have been numerous oil spills as

a result of Sandy that are having an impact on our environment. We have had major problems on our shorelines, and we are going to need to take a look at shoreline restoration and other issues. I would urge our Committee to be prepared to deal with those issues.

As the Chairman pointed out, we have to deal with the funding of storm infrastructure. You are absolutely right. Our first obligation now is to make sure the people who are affected and the communities that are affected, that we do what we can to bring them back to where they need to be. But we also need to deal with the public safety issues, because these events are going to be occurring more frequently in the future.

Let me just give you one example. We have invested in Assateague Island. Assateague Island has been widened, the beaches have been replenished because it acts as a natural storm break to Ocean City, on which there are lots of people who live, have homes, et cetera. It worked, Madam Chairman. Assateague Island worked. It prevented a lot more damage that would have otherwise occurred. I know it is an investment. And sometimes people wonder why we make those investments.

But we make those investments to save lives and property, and it did work. So I am going to be coming back to my colleagues and telling you that we need to invest in those types of common sense ways that we can deal with the realities of severe weather. And we also need, Madam Chair, the Water Resources Development Act, the WRDA bill, I know you had a hearing on that, we need to move that forward. That provides areas where we can help with the necessary infrastructure to deal with flooding and storm damage.

I have introduced the Water Infrastructure Resiliency and Sustainability Act to provide funding to communities for projects such as reducing flooding in vulnerable communities. That deals with particular those communities that have sea level issues. The sea level is rising. And we have to deal with that in the way that we provide support to our local communities.

As I said before, our first priority is to help the affected communities and individuals to make sure that they get the help that they need. But I would implore my colleagues to addressing the problem. The frequency of these severe storms is increasing, and we can ill afford to neglect the safety that is posed by these storms. Long-term safety must be our focus if we are to protect our natural environment and the health and safety of our citizens.

[The prepared statement of Senator Cardin was not received at time of print.]

Senator BOXER. Thank you so much, Senator.

I want to say, while Senator Vitter is still here, I know he needs to go soon, that he and I have discussed bringing the WRDA bill forward within the first—well, we are hoping within the first 30 days. That is our goal.

So we really are going to work, and we have been working on this, so that we don't waste any time, given what we have seen. I think we are going to have a really strong partnership on this.

So we are going to go to Senator Lautenberg for 10 minutes, then Senator Whitehouse, then Senator Gillibrand.

**OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. FRANK R. LAUTENBERG,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

Senator LAUTENBERG. Thank you very much, Madam Chairman.

I think the fact that we are bringing notice about our particular storm situations, but highlighting the fact that across this country, there is no State spared. The more we get the word out, and get an understanding of this thing, and the more we cooperate one with another on the Senate and the Congress, the better chance we are going to have to improve the damage resulting from these storms, and make life a lot better, easier, and safer.

I have spoken on the Senate floor and before this Committee to outline what happened in my home State of New Jersey, brought on by Superstorm Sandy. The human toll of this storm defies description. Roughly 8 million households throughout the region lost power during the storm, including more than 2 and a half million in my State alone.

FEMA estimates the total number of buildings damaged at nearly 72,000. There are storefronts, offices, restaurants, public buildings, homes, and it is pretty hard to imagine what life is like when your home is gone. Because it is not simply the physical possessions, it is the memories, the memorabilia; it is the history of a house.

Imagine these things disappearing in front of you, things which represented your dreams, aspirations, reduced to rubble. Imagine having to evacuate and coming home to find nothing there. The place where you raised your children, created so many memories, gone. That is the reality for far too many New Jerseyans. So as we move forward, we must make sure that when the next storm strikes that this doesn't happen again.

Madam Chair, thank you for your leadership on this issue.

But we know that none of us is safe if one of us isn't. And we learned a valuable lesson from this storm, but we learned it the hardest way. When we don't invest in infrastructure, we leave our communities and our residents in grave danger. That is why in the wake of this storm, we are working not only to recover but to build stronger so that we are better prepared for the next storm.

Today, I would like to take the opportunity to highlight four areas that were vulnerable before the storm and that we have to go and rebuild stronger: flood control projects, water infrastructure, transportation systems, and of course, Superfund sites which unfortunately New Jersey has the largest number. So the problem is huge.

I will begin with our coast, where storm surges destroyed neighborhoods, ruined businesses, displaced families. We found that even among the damage, however, there is a silver lining that points to what we can do to devote resources now and into the future—it is so simple, beach and dune replenishment. We have been chided about that over the years. Is it just so you can have nicer, more comfortable beaches? No, this is part of nature's balance. And when the dunes are in place, the damage is substantially less. We have seen that, and it was quite an awakening.

In many towns across the country, the Federal Government has invested in levees and other infrastructure to protect against storms and flooding. In New Jersey, the beaches are our levees.

They act as critical buffer zones that protect our communities from flooding. In beach replenishment projects, sand is brought in to either widen existing beaches or strengthen dunes in order to provide better protection against storm surges.

Up and down our Jersey coast, we saw that homes that were behind these dunes that had been built up by the Army Corps, replenishment projects were still standing after the storm, even when nearby homes without these projects were totally destroyed. And we see the stark contrast on the barrier island, the barrier island that we have in New Jersey called Long Beach Island. In the Long Beach Island community of Colgate, which didn't have an Army Corps project, homes were destroyed. We see one of these homes in this picture.

Without the Army Corps projects, when you look at that picture, to this image of homes that were shielded by beach projects in Brant Beaches on this barrier island there are several communities, another community on Long Beach Island, and you see how well they withstood the storm. And here is where the storm lost its fury, much lower than the houses were located.

This picture shows how the dune was constructed so that it could absorb the storm's force, protecting the homes in the neighborhoods behind it.

Overall, New Jersey's initial estimate says that damage to the entire State is at least \$29 billion, with costs expected to rise. And our Governor, who did a wonderful job in the management of this crisis, brought in additional costs that they are still uncovering. So it will be higher than that.

But we could have avoided some of that damage if we had invested in advance. Army Corps beach projects protect taxpayers by preventing the kind of storm damage that FEMA is now paying to clean up, and at a fraction of the cost.

So I am pleased that Chairman Boxer's draft WRDA bill included a program that I requested to allow new projects to be constructed following a natural disaster. I intend to work with the Chairman, Chairman Boxer, to charge the Corps to rebuild damaged beaches, dams, or levees better than they were before, as opposed to the current practice that the Corps has of merely repairing or rehabilitating a project to its pre-storm condition.

During Sandy, we also saw outdated water infrastructure lead to failures in two of New Jersey's largest wastewater treatment facilities, releasing millions of gallons of sewage into the bay and rising river as a result. The infrastructure in its entirety has to be in concert with what we now know and can do in advance of these tragedies. Although the sewage spill has now been contained, the fact that this breach happened in the first place shows the vulnerability of our infrastructure and the urgent need to rebuild better and stronger.

And with New Jersey, and the entire country, water infrastructure is in bad need of improvement and repair. We must get a significant investment moving forward. Our transportation network suffered unprecedented damage as well. Highways, roads, this storm covered everything. We are damaged, littered with debris. The Holland Tunnel carries thousands of vehicles each day from New Jersey into New York City; it was flooded. That transpor-

tation is an important part of our economy and our culture in that region.

The damage to our highways and transit system caused severe congestion, stranding New Jerseyans and creating delays for miles. As many learned during this storm, transportation in New Jersey has an impact on more than just New Jersey residents. Sandy affected anyone who rides our rails, rides through our State, or uses products that come from our ports.

So I am going to be working with this Committee—I look forward to it—to rebuild New Jersey’s transportation infrastructure to make it stronger and more resilient, in addition to bettering our infrastructure in at least two cases, flooding from Sandy, damage to the Superfund sites. As I mentioned, in New Jersey, leading the potential for releases of toxic pollution into the environment. That is why I have a letter on the way to EPA to conduct a thorough investigation of the storm’s impact on sites throughout the region.

Today also I am introducing a Superfund Emergency Response Act, which requires EPA to perform an assessment of Superfund sites following any natural disaster, and allows Congress to appropriate that emergency funding to remediate any damage or toxic release. The bill will also require EPA to come up with a plan that better protects Superfund sites that are terribly vulnerable to future disasters.

Last, as we continue to survey the damage, we have to remember that Superstorm Sandy is only a sign of things to come. In this changing climate, and the reluctance here in this Committee to look at the changes in global temperature, it is very difficult to understand. The intensity of weather like Sandy, there is more and more to come. And over the coming days and weeks, we will have the opportunity in this Committee to make sure that the Northeast recovers and rebuilds in just that way.

I thank my colleagues, all of them, who have taken an interest here, in sharing the experience, unfortunately, that we learned. Thank you.

Senator BOXER. Thank you, Senator.

Senator, I think that legislation you describe is very appropriate. I am looking forward to reading the details and helping you get it done.

Senator Whitehouse.

**OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. SHELDON WHITEHOUSE,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF RHODE ISLAND**

Senator WHITEHOUSE. Thank you, Madam Chair. I will be briefer than my colleagues, because I was here for an earlier hearing and had a chance to make a similar statement. So I don’t want to be too redundant.

Hurricane Sandy hit Rhode Island, it hit Rhode Island hard. The 9.5 foot crest at Fox Point, tidal crest at Fox Point, was the fifth highest ever on record. And we have 130,000 homes and businesses lose power, which is a significant portion of a State of 1 million people.

The southern coast of Rhode Island was hit the hardest. This is the westerly coast, this is Misquamicut. And you can see how the hotels and restaurants along the shore were really clobbered by

this. I can remember walking around and seeing, coming up onto the beach, jalopies, vehicles from the 1930s and the 1940s that had been buried those decades ago to hold the beach intact. And now for the first time since then, all the tearing up of the beaches has exposed them, like old cadavers from a Hollywood movie coming out of the beach.

Let's go to the next one. This is the road at Connecticut Avenue that goes along Misquamicut Beach. The sand from all that disturbance was piled up chest high, and we are still actually literally digging out from that sand. The damage went back in the neighborhoods behind this commercial street, several blocks back. It was a very considerable blow.

Now, mercifully, a lot of these businesses are seasonal businesses. And the spirit there is fantastic about getting back and getting up and getting running. The local chamber of commerce is already taking up local collections to help their business colleagues get back in operation in time for our next summer season. So we hope we will be able to greet Rhode Island's tourists with a wonderful set of restored beaches. But it is going to take some help.

Let's go to the next one. This is further east at Carpenter's Beach, where these houses have gone right into the water. They may not look like very big houses, but Senator Lautenberg spoke about the memories involved. These are houses that families have had for three and four generations. And as you can see, they are close to each other. This is a very tight summer community.

So the emotional blow, in addition to the financial and physical one, is really very considerable.

The gentleman here in the green jacket is somebody very familiar to this Committee; he used to be a member of it. That is Governor Lincoln Chafee, who was with me, touring the damage. The lady—I think it was the lady who owns this house right here that he is looking into—told me that when she was a child, their house had a big lawn, and then there was a roadway, and then there was a parking lot, and then there was a beach. And the beach was so long that she can remember having to hustle across it because of the hot sand burning her little feet, rushing to get to the water. But it was a long haul.

So there has been an enormous amount of beachfront lost that is really a systemic problem in the Northeast, and particularly in Rhode Island.

So we also toured Narragansett, Rhode Island, where this is an absolutely iconic, wonderful restaurant out at the point called the Coast Guard House. It was washed right through, mercifully structurally it appears to be sound. But it is going to need a complete rebuild. I know the owner, and my guess is he will probably be back in operation for a New Year's party, because he is pretty energetic.

But there is a lot of damage. The seawall, the sidewalk, this is big for Rhode Island. Because we have tourism generating more than \$2.3 billion, that is the Rhode Island Economic Development Corporation number, 10 percent of State and local revenue is tourism related, 5 percent of our gross State product is tourism related. It is our fourth largest industry, and in 2009 supported more than

60,000 jobs. So the economic effect of this is very, very considerable.

I am delighted that the Chairman has held these hearings, because I think it is important that there be two key points drawn from it. One is that there is a new normal of new extremes. We have to be prepared for it. The infrastructure for the past is no longer adequate for the new normal of new extremes that we are now facing.

The reason that we have this new normal of new extremes is because global climate change is happening and is real. We have tolerated the deniers for far too long in this body. The public is with us, the science is clear, our national security establishments, our business communities all know that this is real. There is a rear guard action in this building, led by polluters, to try to prevent us from taking action on this.

But we have to face the fact that the deniers are wrong. They are just plain, dead wrong. Whatever their motivations may be, and that is a separate question, they are wrong. And we have to deal with that. And I think some of the courtesies that we have given to one another collegially really have to yield to the fact that some of the things that are being said in the Senate and occasionally regrettably in this Committee chamber, are just plain wrong. Sandy shows the price of not being attentive to these facts.

I thank you for your leadership, Madam Chair.

Senator BOXER. Well, Senator, I want to thank you for your remarks. I feel as you do, that the clock is ticking, and Hurricane Sandy has shown us all what the scientists sitting right in this room, the day I got the gavel, they all were sitting right there. And they told us exactly what would happen, and it is all happening. And you can close your eyes and cover your ears and put a pillow over your head, but anyone with a heartbeat and a pulse can tell that things are changing. You are right. And we are going to do everything we can to make progress.

I do want to make one point. President Obama's policies have reduced the carbon in the air, and will over the next many years. The amazing work that he did with all of us on fuel economy standards and enforcing the Clean Air Act, which I just want to say to my colleagues who are here, and unfortunately those who are not, I can't address them. If they were here I would address them on this. The colleagues here and others in the Senate chamber stopped many who tried to roll back the Clean Air Act, as it pertained to emissions that were coming from utilities and other polluters.

That was critical, because we want to be much more direct, you and I, Senator Whitehouse, I don't speak for anyone else, on how we approach this. I just feel people have to understand that the progress that we made, and we have initial studies that show the progress we have made, only because we fought so hard against rolling back what my colleagues on the other side have tried to do on the Senate floor, with environmental rider after environmental rider. And if they don't see from Hurricane Sandy, I have to call it Superstorm Sandy, the future, if we just blithely go along, then I am very disturbed for our children and our grandchildren.

I just want to thank you, Senator Whitehouse, for your amazing leadership on this, day after day. People don't know, every time

you see me, you are pushing so hard. And I so agree with you. With your determination, Rhode Island, you said, the people are very determined. Well, they have a great Senator who is determined. I know we will make more progress.

Senator WHITEHOUSE. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Senator BOXER. OK.

Senator CARPER. Madam Chair.

Could I just add to something you and Senator Whitehouse have said? We held up some photographs earlier of the Prime Hook National Wildlife Refuge. If you will hold them high, we are looking to the west here. Prime Hook used to be a freshwater wetlands and refuge. Now it is largely saltwater that reaches here. The bottom part of the picture is the Delaware Bay and just to the south, the Atlantic Ocean.

There is a road that you can barely see up there, maybe in the top corner. But there is a road called Prime Hook Road that comes from west to east, and it meets the Delaware Bay. That road is underwater quite a bit of the time now. But it used to be you could drive out Prime Hook Road, driving toward the east, toward the Delaware Bay, and as you got to the Bay there was a big parking lot where people could park their cars or their boats or their trucks or whatever. Today there is no parking lot, it is all underwater. You can look out, you stand there looking to the east where the parking lot used to be, just to the right about 1 o'clock you can see what looks like a concrete bunker, part of it sticking up out of the water. That concrete bunker used to be 500 feet west of the dune lines, used to be 500 feet west of the dune lines.

You have heard me quote here with tongue in cheek that famed California climatologist, Stephen Stills, who once said, something is happening here, just what it is ain't exactly clear. It has gotten a lot clearer in the last several months. My hope is that others will see that, too.

Thanks very much.

Senator BOXER. Well, thank you so much. We are going to call on Senator Gillibrand, followed by Senator Jack Reed. We are so happy, Senator Whitehouse just opened the door for your testimony. We are just thrilled that you are here.

But Senator Gillibrand, you and I talked during Superstorm Sandy on the phone. I know the burden that you were carrying, along with all my colleagues here. I just want to say that the citizens of New York are so lucky to have you and Senator Schumer and others just carrying the weight of Superstorm Sandy, so that we can fix this and do some mitigation, so we don't see this again.

**OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. KIRSTEN GILLIBRAND,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF NEW YORK**

Senator GILLIBRAND. Thank you, Madam Chairwoman, for holding this hearing today. I can't tell you how important it is for the Congress to understand the depth and breadth of this storm and what impact it has actually had.

I also appreciate all the kind words and your call in the middle of the storm, giving your condolences for the victims and for the families that were suffering.

I also want to thank my colleagues who will be appearing before this panel later in this hearing, Senator Schumer will come in, who has been a stalwart advocate for New York, and the rest of our delegation will come in as well. So I just want to thank you for giving us the opportunity to tell the stories of what has happened to our families in New York.

Just over a month ago, Superstorm Sandy ravaged the Northeast. It left a path of destruction that cut across the most densely populated region of the country, unimaginably altering the lives of tens of millions of people. In Sandy's wake, more than 40 New Yorkers died. Millions more were left with significant damage to their homes and neighborhoods, their businesses, their families.

Now, as New Yorkers, we have been reading the stories and seeing it on the news, but for the rest of Washington, the stories of heartbreak are unimaginable. The most heartbreaking story was when I went to Staten Island, and we met with first responders whose job was to find two children. What happened in this case was, a mother was worried because she had lost power and her husband told her to find a different place to stay with the children and urged her to go to Brooklyn to see her mother.

She took the children in the car, but what happened in Staten Island is the storm surge was so severe, a 10-foot wave came across the road, her vehicle stalled, she took her children out of the car, she tried to get them to higher land and they were taken from her arms. These children were 2 years old and 4 years old. And the mother could do nothing about it because the storm was so strong.

Now, she is just one story of many of families who lost their lives because of this storm. And I can tell you, our Mayor and our Governor worked so hard to evacuate families. They evacuated families all across New York. And that is one of the reasons why the loss of life was as low as it was.

But for each of these lives that were lost, there are many more. Another story that, you think you have a safe place to live. In Westchester County, a family had their son at home, in his home safe. He had a friend over to help him weather the storm. A tree crashed on the home, and the two boys were killed, 11 and 13.

Some elderly couples, they just couldn't leave, they couldn't leave in time. An elderly couple in Staten Island drowned when the rising tides came into their home and they couldn't escape in time.

So these are just a small number of the horrible stories that took the lives of New Yorkers. And I have spent a lot of time, as has Senator Schumer and our delegation, visiting with the families and helping them to begin to piece their lives together.

It has affected communities all across New York. Each of the five boroughs were affected. The Hudson Valley, Long Island, the devastation just came across a huge area. We will hear from more of the delegation from New Jersey as well.

So as we begin to rebuild, folks are looking to Washington for, how can you help us. I can tell you, we must help these families begin to rebuild. The devastation is so severe. For New York families, lives have been lost, and homes are destroyed, businesses are in rubble. And families have been cut off from basic services. One of the big stories across New York was how many families were without electricity for so long, for weeks. Some still don't have elec-

tricity. And obviously as the cold of winter continues to come in, we are worried about their safety.

But amid this destruction, I have also had the blessing to see what is best about New York, New Yorkers are very strong. They are very resilient. Communities have come together to rebuild. I can't tell you how many friends I saw helping other friends, gutting basements, pulling out destroyed property, having all of their belongings in the front of their homes. But it was these friends and community members that were giving hope to families who had lost everything.

Now, we have lost, so far, we have had claims for 305,000 homes that have been seriously damaged or destroyed, more than 265,000 businesses have been impacted. Thousands of New Yorkers are still homeless.

In the immediate aftermath of the storm, we had 2 million New Yorkers lose power. And because some families' homes' boilers were destroyed or electrical systems were destroyed, we still have many, many homes that do not have electricity today.

Our Governor has estimated that it will be about \$32.8 billion to begin to rebuild New York. And that is just for New York, that is not including the billions required for New Jersey and other States.

So I am going to take you through a couple of other places around the State. This is Breezy Point. As you can see in this neighborhood, the whole neighborhood was destroyed by fire. It was absolutely devastated. Even a member of our congressional delegation's home was razed by fire.

One hundred-eleven homes were destroyed in this particular fire and flood; the entire community will have to be rebuilt.

Since this Committee is so relevant for transportation, I want to go through specifically some transportation infrastructure, since I think this Committee will be most impacted by that request. This is a photo of the South Ferry subway station. You can see the water, not very clear, but it has literally consumed the whole subway station. These are the escalators going down into water.

This next picture is of the Hugh Carey Tunnel. The whole tunnel was covered up to the top.

This is a picture of rail that was fully washed away. This is in Westchester, this is what it looks like normally. The water just literally moved the whole tracks off its bearing.

One of our major areas of jurisdiction is the Army Corps of Engineers. They will play a major role in reconstruction of New York's flood protection system. Senator Schumer will, I am sure, talk more about this. But we have already given them a list of projects that they have already authorized, they just have never begun. Or some they have started but never completed. That is almost a billion dollars' worth of Army Corps projects.

But those are the ones we know we can do, they have already been studied. We know they are the most urgent issues.

I just want to conclude by reiterating to my colleagues in the Congress how important meeting the needs of these families and businesses is. One of the roles of the Federal Government is to keep people safe. And when lives are so destroyed, when communities lie in rubble, when families don't know how to begin to rebuild, that is really when the Federal Government makes a dif-

ference. So I just want to urge my colleagues to open their hearts, find goodwill, and help restore and rebuild New York.

Thank you, Madam Chairwoman.

Senator BOXER. Senator, let me just say, you have given us the most touching testimony. I thank you because you allowed your emotions to come to the surface. You put an amazing human face on this superstorm. And we have a lot of work to do. I thank you so much.

I am so proud you are on this Committee. How many times have you run in 4 years?

Senator GILLIBRAND. Twice in four.

Senator BOXER. Twice in 4 years. So now you have some time to devote full time to this task. I am so pleased that you are with us on this Committee.

I am going to call on Senator Reed, and then Senator Schumer. I want to tell them what we did in the opening, since we started about a half-hour, no about an hour ago, we heard from our colleagues in Delaware, in Maryland, we heard from Senator Whitehouse from Rhode Island. We heard from Senator Lautenberg and now from Senator Gillibrand. We had so many people affected.

The purpose of this very important hearing today is for history, it is for history to record this historic storm. I personally believe it will be a turning point, I hope it will be a turning point here in our fight to address climate change in a way that protects our people.

So we are going to have this record, you will be part of this record. I look at all of you as my eyes and ears. As this Chairman, I did speak with Senators Gillibrand and Schumer during this devastating event, because my heart ached for the people there. I have gone through so many disasters in my State, earthquakes, fires, floods, droughts, everything. I know it is so difficult to wrap your arms around.

The one thing Senator Schumer said to me, and has continued to say, is how amazing, what a broad swath this disaster was. So it is hard to wrap your arms around it, but we will.

The second reason for this hearing is for legislative purposes. We are about to take up a water resources bill. And a lot of you know—it has been a while since we have had one. Senator Vitter and I are going to work together on it. He is going to be the new Ranking, and he is very encouraging about this bill.

So I think we are going to work across party lines on this WRDA bill. So with that, I want to again welcome you and call on Senator Reed. You each have 10 minutes. Say what is in your heart, what you want us to hear, what you want history to record about this storm.

**STATEMENT OF HON. JACK REED,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF RHODE ISLAND**

Senator REED. Thank you, Madam Chairwoman, for your kind invitation to testify today, and for your incredible leadership on this issue. I want to recognize obviously my colleague Senator Whitehouse, who has been such a powerful force, not only dealing with Hurricane Sandy, but so many other issues in the State of Rhode Island.

Later today we will hear from my colleagues in the House, Representatives Langevin and Cicilline. They too have been actively engaged in weathering the storm and then dealing with the after effects.

Rhode Island suffered significant damage. A major disaster was declared in four of our five counties, the south coast of Washington County, which includes the communities of Westerly, Charlestown, South Kingstown, and Narragansett, was pounded heavily over several tide cycles. Homes were uprooted, dunes were obliterated. Sand was driven back into coastal ponds, threw homes onto local roadways, exposing underground pipes, septic tanks, and other utilities. Off the coast, near Brock Island, the Army Corps Coastal and Ocean System data buoy recorded perhaps the largest wave of the storm, 47 feet.

The island sustained severe road damage, as well as damage to its docks. In Middletown, Rhode Island, the Rhode Island National Wildlife Refuge in Thatcher's Point received sustained significant damage. It is an isolated area, it can't be used, because the one access road has been obliterated.

But despite this damage, we know the outcome for our State could have been far worse had the storm followed a slightly different track. And our sympathies remain with the families throughout the Northeast, so eloquently and passionately described by Senator Gillibrand and I am sure also by Senator Schumer, who have lost loved ones, who sustained devastating damage, who are still recovering. All America, our hearts literally go out to them and to their representatives who are doing so much to help them.

In Rhode Island and elsewhere throughout the region, we were able to limit some of the losses because we had time to prepare. So I want to acknowledge and thank the National Weather Service, which produced very accurate forecasts and gave emergency planners several days advance warning. I also want to commend the Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency led by Theresa Murray, the Rhode Island National Guard, commanded by General Kevin McBride, and local emergency planners for the work they did in warning the public and in evacuating areas with the highest risk.

I also want to commend our utility, National Grid, for the planning and the response. They did an extraordinary job with crews already assembled and routed before the storm.

Throughout the response and recovery the support from the Federal Government has been exemplary. Whenever the State asked for an emergency or disaster declaration, President Obama provided, often within hours of the request. Agencies we also quick to respond. Within a day of the disaster, Secretary Ray LaHood provided \$3 million in emergency relief funding to open roads in the State.

As we consider efforts to support the recovery, I would note that this was the third major disaster that has hit Rhode Island in as many years, reflecting this climate activity which is unusual and I don't think will dissipate. We have had hurricanes in 2011, 2012, and a major flood in 2010. Each of these disasters has affected a majority if not the entire State. The size and frequency of these events, coupled with the very harsh economic and fiscal climate in

the State, has made it very challenging for Rhode Island to fund the portion of the recovery that they must fund.

And for this reason, relief in the form of additional Federal funding through disaster CDBG funding and Economic Development Administration grants, as well as cost share flexibility for FEMA assistance, has been important to the State in the past and will be again very important for post-Sandy recovery. In addition, resources to the Department of Transportation's emergency relief program will be essential to fully restore the roads damaged in the storm.

As we move through recovery and into long-term mitigation, we should also be mindful of the long-term impacts and resiliency of our coast and the impacts of sea level rise and global warming. I believe that addressing these challenges requires the participation of the Army Corps of Engineers, NOAA, the U.S. Geologic Service, FEMA and so many other agencies. I think the Chairman has raised the right issue. This should be a turning point in our efforts to deal with these issues on a comprehensive basis, not on a particularized basis.

There are smaller measures, however, that could be taken as well. In particular, we should not ignore the Army Corps' continuing authority program, the CAP program, as part of the response. This includes section 103, small beach erosion, section 205, flood control, and section 206, environmental restoration. For States and communities with limited resources, these smaller scale projects can be enormously beneficial and effective, particularly after disasters.

I appreciate the steps that have been taken in the draft reauthorization of the Water Resources Development Act to utilize CAP authority for post-disaster assessment and projects. I also want to acknowledge the Committee's efforts to increase the per charge cost limitations for some CAP authorities. These are positive measures that we should work to expand upon.

Before I conclude, I want to note the role that previous Federal investors have made in limiting damage. We often overlook prudent steps that are taken before a storm that pay off significantly. First, the Army Corps of Engineers Fox Point hurricane barrier. This project was built about 45 years ago to protect the city of Providence from storm surges like those that overwhelmed Providence in the hurricane of 1938 and Hurricane Carol in 1954.

Over the last several years, the Army Corps has made significant investments to modernize the barrier, ensuring that it has been able to operate in events like Sandy and Irene. In addition to the investments with regular operations and maintenance funding, the infusion of resources under the Recovery Act has helped speed repair and rehabilitation of the barrier. This has been very important in ensuring that it could continue to operate during major storms, literally without the Corps' intervention we would have felt very vulnerable to the flooding of Providence with catastrophic effects.

Second, on a smaller scale, a new culvert in Bristol, Rhode Island, as part of the flood control project funded by EDA and also part of the emergency supplemental appropriations bill of 2010, helped the town absorb damages. Otherwise, areas of that town

would have been inundated as they are in every storm, some even minor storms.

So I hope that we follow through with the work of this Committee to authorize and to give direction to not only remediation and response to standing, but long-term protection and restoration of our coastal waters and our coastal areas.

Again, thank you, Chairwoman Boxer, for what you have done this morning and what you will do. Once again, I can only say to Senator Gillibrand, Senator Schumer, Senator Menendez, Senator Lautenberg, and others, our prayers are with you and your constituents. You suffered grievously.

Thank you.

Senator BOXER. Senator, thank you so much. We will work with you as we get this WRDA bill to the floor.

Senator Schumer, we are so honored to have you here as well to be part of this record. So please, you are recognized for 10 minutes, followed by Senator Menendez.

**STATEMENT OF HON. CHARLES E. SCHUMER,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF NEW YORK**

Senator SCHUMER. Thank you.

First, Madam Chair, let me thank you so much for having this hearing, for your caring and compassion. As you mentioned, you were on the phone with us the minute Sandy hit. I feel so good about several in this Committee, many thanks. But the fact that you are Chair of the Committee, and you are such a good legislator and so compassionate about these things gives us some hope. The fact that Senator Vitter has shown an active role in many areas and has been through this makes us feel good about it. The fact that both Senator Gillibrand and Senator Lautenberg are on the Committee, as well as Senator Whitehouse, three States affected by the storm, gives us a lot of faith and hope in these terrible times.

Senator BOXER. And without taking any time away, so stop the clock, I want you to know that Senator Carper also had impacts, and he is on the Committee, and Senator Cardin from Maryland. So it is a Committee that really felt the impact of Sandy.

Senator SCHUMER. Right. Thank you.

And I just again, I wake up every morning with a little bit of a knot in my stomach just thinking about what happened. It is devastating. The first day after the storm I flew in a helicopter with the Mayor and the Governor. And you could see the breadth of the damage. It is so wide, there is so much. This island, Long Island, has 7 million people. And many of them live right on the south shore, from Seagate to the Rockaways and Breezy Point, to Long Beach, all the way up. So you saw how broad it was.

And then for the 2 weeks, as recently as Monday, before we came down here, we are touring the areas. And you see the depth of it. I was on Staten Island Monday, and met a leader of the Marine Corps League, trying to help veterans. He pulled me aside and said, I have lost my home, I don't know where to go, what to do. He is near tears in his eyes. This is a tough, grizzled vet.

We went to the Red Hook Houses, elderly women, poor women, on the 18th floor, stuck for 2 weeks, no elevators, no telephone, no cell phone, no electricity, no food, no water in the sink or the toilet

or the shower. And then you look at just practical things. You look at Manhattan over here, and there are huge numbers, 20 million square feet of office buildings out of commission.

Our hospital, one of the leading teaching hospitals in the world, NYU, they never expected water to be 14 feet higher than it has ever been. A billion dollars, they had all their equipment in the basement. That is where they were told to put it, when you do these CAT scans and radio tomography and all this stuff, it has to be very balanced, the machine. So they tell them, put it in the basement. All flooded, close to a billion dollars of machinery, gone.

And I could go on and on and on. But we need help. I really want to thank you for having this hearing. The storm was an unfortunate wake up call, not only to New York and our neighboring States, but to the country and even the world about what we must do to protect our region, fortify coastlines from storm surge activity.

Simply put, New York has no choice. We must simultaneously adapt and fortify our coastline to protect against future storms. We are a waterfront city. We are a waterfront State. People forget that. But we are basically, the whole southern area of New York is three islands, Long Island, Staten Island, and Manhattan. On those three islands are close to 10 million people, more than most States.

We are connected by a vast array of hundred year old tunnels and bridges that were built long before the word climate change, global warming was in anybody's mind. So most of our infrastructure has been built without the necessary flood protections in their design. Sandy reminded us of a very stark reality: we can either invest now, or we will pay later. I would argue that a refusal to invest earlier in both dealing with some of these specific problems, but also in preventing climate change, we are paying. We are paying later, in a sense. But there will be many more later, unfortunately, if we don't do anything.

After touring the damage for the past 4 weeks, we are paying later now. And we will keep paying later. Lower Manhattan was blacked out for days. The Brooklyn Battery Tunnel, longest tunnel had close to 100 million gallons of water in it. It was totally flooded from one end to the other. Unbelievable, who would have thought it?

The southern shore of Staten Island, the Rockaways battered. Long Beach, 35,000 people, every house flooded. Seagate, 8,000 people, every house flooded. The Rockaways, 100,000 people, most homes flooded. The flooding came in not only from the ocean side, but from the bay side. You thought, well, I live five, six blocks from the ocean. In Bell Harbor it came both ways and met in the middle and many other places as well.

So huge, and to compare it to Katrina, Katrina lost more lives. We lost too many lives, but not close to Katrina. But in other ways, it is much more devastating than Katrina. Right now in New York, 305,000 homes are seriously damaged or gone. Kirsten showed the pictures of some of them that are just gone, by fire. Because the water systems failed and the wind, then the electrical systems got shorted, fire, wind.

And so 305,000 homes seriously damaged or gone, just in New York, up to now. There are going to be more that we will learn

about, because the flooding is still there in lots of the basements. These are low lying houses. There were 214,000 total homes gone in Katrina, of the same level of damage. Businesses, 265,000. This is just New York. Bob will talk about and Frank talked about New Jersey, which has similar levels of damage.

In Katrina, 18,000 businesses. Because of the density of the population, it is a much greater economic impact on our region, of course, and on the nation than otherwise.

So despite all this pain, we can't entirely fault those who came before us for building this great metropolis without adequate flood protections. The threat was not the same. The technology of flood protection was not what it is today. And at the same time, we know that the 105, 100 year floods were rare events. And now they are every few years.

So where does that bring us? In the days since Sandy, much has been made about what future flood protections New York needs to adapt to the new 21st century climate. There are a vast array of opinions and ideas, from one extreme to the other. And I commend my colleagues in government and academia for having the courage to think outside the box in advocating for the future New York.

Some preliminary research has suggested a Dutch-like system of floodgates in New York Harbor as an expensive but feasible alternative. Others are pushing for a retreat from the coastline. But a retreat is not just a couple of hundred houses. It is hundreds of thousands of people. That is a huge demographic, anthropological, sociological, and economic change. You have to be careful before you just quickly advocate that.

To members of this Committee, I say we should not be victims of these two choices only, which may be extreme. So today I am recommending to you a comprehensive Federal approach to protecting New York's coastline well into the future. It consists of three basic principles. To protect ourselves in the future, we must accelerate, study, and streamline, and then build. We can no longer be burdened by rule that were written before massive floods were common and a process that was created before storms of the century happened every 10 years.

First, we must fast track and build projects that Congress has already authorized and that the Corps has studied. Fortunately, there are a bunch of these projects, and they are noted here. Can you see this? Should we hold it up a little? These are seven projects already studied and already authorized.

Some of them were rejected by the local communities. Long Beach, 35,000 people, none of whose homes were unaffected, they were going to build dunes. A small group of homeowners objected in 2005, and they didn't do it. But this proposal is there, the study is there. I have spoken to the elected officials, the city manager, they are ready to go. All we need is funding, because they are already authorized and studied.

And there are other projects as well, on the south shore of Staten Island, in Rockaway, Gilgo Beach, Coney Island, Fire Island, and Asharoken.

So this concept referred to accelerate to construction is what New York needs now. We estimate the amount of money is about \$500 million to a billion dollars for these seven projects. No red tape, no

study, because it has been studied. Community support in every one of them. We are going to put that in the supplemental bill, but obviously your Committee will review it.

Why do we need it now? Because in some of our most badly damaged areas, south shore of Staten Island, Long Beach, Suffolk County, you have no protection. A storm, a minor storm could come flood again. So we have to move quickly.

In some places, they wanted to build seawalls, some places rock armor, some places dune systems. Along the coast, like Midlid Beach in Staten Island, where surges over 10 feet came in. And in other coastal areas, Coney Island, the Rockaways, Gilgo, some of the projects were even partially built. But then there was no funding, and that ended.

Now, here is the good news. We know from Sandy that many places that had engineering protections that the Army Corps had designed fared much, much better. Point Lookout, which is right here, did much better than the neighboring areas, because they actually had Army Corps built-in protections.

The same, I am told, in parts of New Jersey. So this works. So we have requested the Army Corps to accelerate.

Second—and I will try to hurry this along, Madam Chair—second, we have to immediately authorize and fund a comprehensive hurricane protection study of New York Harbor and the surrounding region. These protections aren't enough. We need the Army Corps to start right away and do a study. They did that in New Orleans, and then they built a series of levees and barriers and island dunes and seawalls. They did it in Houston. That is why a comprehensive study in partnership with the Governors of New York, New Jersey, port authority, MTA, and city of New York must commence immediately. We are asking the President to put that in the supplemental legislation he will introduce early next week.

There are many ideas out there. And third, we must reform the Federal flood protection process that the Army Corps currently operates. Let me be blunt: the process in many places in many ways is badly broken. Projects take years and decades, because of a mound of red tape and lack of funding. Senator Vitter has been very active in this area. And he has been a vocal proponent for a leaner, more efficient Army Corps. We look to work with you, Madam Chair, and him to move forward.

So if we can do these three things, we can protect New York from future devastating storms, we can protect New Jersey as well, and we would work with them on that. So I hope that the Committee will look favorably on our accelerate, study, and streamline proposal.

I thank the Chair.

Senator BOXER. Thank you. I want to mention that everything that you have said is going to be in one way or another part of our WRDA bill. So as Kirsten Gillibrand, Senator Gillibrand works with us, we will consult with all of you. Because we don't have any earmarks any more, you all know that. And let me just say, for the 10th time, I think that was ridiculous, so-called reform. What it means is that we can't—we who know—if anything I am getting out of this listening to all of you is, you know every corner and every nook and cranny of where the problem occurred. Unfortu-

nately, because there is no more earmarks, we have to leave it up to the Administration.

However, something you said is important. A lot of the projects that haven't gone forward have engineers' reports, many are authorized. And our WRDA bill will be able, without naming the projects, to move those forward, which is very important.

And in terms of accelerating, we have a new draft proposal to respond to these extreme weather events, Senator Schumer, which would enable us to have the Corps move very, very quickly. Because there are 10 different laws that come into play. And in rebuilding and mitigating future storms, we just can't afford to have this time lag.

So I want to thank you so much.

I want to welcome Senators Menendez and Senator Blumenthal. I want to say that what we are doing here is, we are making an historic record of this storm. Personally, I think it is a turning point in our approach to climate change, I hope it is. I am going to make sure all of you have books of this record today. It is how important I think it is. You are the eyewitnesses, you represent the people. We can't have millions of people here testifying. But your testimony is so critical. And you will be part of this record.

We also are using this hearing as a way to finalize our WRDA bill, which will be coming forward very early in the next session.

Senator Menendez, welcome, you have 10 minutes. We are very happy that you could take the time to be here.

**STATEMENT OF HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

Senator MENENDEZ. Madam Chair, first of all, thank you for your personal expressions of concern soon after the storm. I appreciate it, as do the people of my State.

And thank you for your leadership, as well as Senator Inhofe and other distinguished members of the Committee, for giving us a forum to explain just how devastating Superstorm Sandy was to our region and to highlight the help that we need to rebuild.

New Jersey was at the epicenter of the storm's entry. And the powerful storm surge overwhelmed our State, and the result is damage on a massive scale. As someone who has lived in New Jersey his entire life, I have never seen the devastation that Sandy brought us.

The numbers are pretty staggering across the region. In New Jersey, we lost 39 people's lives to the storm. Based on preliminary—and I emphasize that—preliminary FEMA estimates, there are over 231,000 applications for homes and businesses in New Jersey that were damaged. But we certainly expect that the numbers will surge much higher.

Over half of the State, 2.7 million households, lost power. Many for extended periods of time, some still today. The storm was the largest mass transit disaster in our nation's history, 4 out of 10 of the nation's transit riders had their commutes disrupted by the storm, many still today. New Jersey Transit alone had dozens of locomotives and rail cars damaged in the flooding, and miles and miles of tracks damaged.

The preliminary damage estimate provided by the State is now up to \$36.9 billion in damage, and everyone expects that number to rise.

Those are the numbers. And in one way they may be a way to quantify the damage, but they fail to paint a picture of what we have seen throughout the State. The level of destruction, the faces of the many thousands of displaced people who find themselves homeless and with basically nothing left from their homes, their possessions, their lifetime keepsakes gone. Entire neighborhoods whose several generations of families live in close knit communities, gone. Thousands of decades old small businesses ruined, their owners unsure if they will have the ability or the means to rebuild.

And we are getting more damage numbers, but the human toll is truly incalculable.

The sheer scope of the damage is also difficult to fathom. And I have seen it from the air, from the water, on foot. And the breadth and scope it, we have hosted the President and the Vice President and a whole host of Cabinet officials. We appreciate the Administration's many visits to get a sense of it.

But my staff has compiled some pictures here that I would like to show you to give you a sense. This is the Mantoloking Bridge which crosses Barnegat Bay and crosses Brick with Mantoloking. As you can see in the picture, the storm surge ripped a gash right through Mantoloking. Amazingly, this bridge can be repaired. But it is obvious in this picture many of the surrounding homes were lost, and part of the highway will need to be rebuilt.

On a boat tour of the area I saw damage for myself and took this picture of a house floating down the river. It is only one of many. This is a shipping container and a large pleasure boat tossed onto the Morgan rail bridge on the New Jersey coastline, along with tons of debris. It is a major rail intersection that moves so many New Jerseyans across the State. It took a lot of work to restore service on New Jersey Transit, which suffered disruptions on every rail line. This is only by way of example one.

Even today, the Port Authority's PATH Terminal at Hoboken is inoperable and will not be back online for some time. This is a live video of what took place on that evening with Port Authority cameras giving you a sense of the flooding that took place in the terminal. And just gives you a sense of how deep the flooding took place. This is as you go right into the tracks, the level of flooding that was taking place. Those are the PATH Terminals where you would obviously board a PATH train along New York City or along the coast. Tens of thousands today still cannot use that terminal.

In addition to transportation damage, many small businesses in New Jersey are facing the possibility of going out of business. Some were hit with thousands of dollars in lost business, while others saw their entire inventory destroyed. Interestingly enough, I had a visit from the head of the federally qualified health centers in our State, there are 20. They suffered as well, because they had a whole period of time in which they were closed. So the revenue stream for them during this whole period of time has affected them. Many of them, of course, were damaged as well.

So while the SBA has low interest loan programs, which I have to be honest with you, are pretty close to commercial rates today, that is not going to help the hardest hit businesses. These entrepreneurs that fuel our economy have been hit with a one-two punch. First they had the great recession, and now, just as we are beginning to recover, and they were seeing the light in the tunnel, that tunnel gets flooded on them with a debilitating storm.

So whether it is through flexibility in the Community Development Block Grant program, which you have a history of with Hurricane Katrina, or a new disaster recovery block grant, or through more flexible SBA or other programs, we should provide grants to get small businesses back on their feet. This will not only help the small business owners themselves, it will keep the workers on the job, bring back tax revenue for local governments to repair and rebuild and restore a sense of normalcy for our communities.

We were already at over 9 percent unemployment before the storm. And if history teaches us anything from Hurricane Katrina, it is that unemployment dramatically rose subsequently. That is a big challenge.

To economically rebuild New Jersey, we also need to rebuild the Jersey Shore. That is a \$38 billion tourism economy in our State. The Jersey Shore isn't just about summer homes—that sometimes is a huge misconception. It has been transformed into year-round communities.

The next two slides show the importance of some of what Senator Schumer was talking about, Army Corps on our shoreline. Stockton College did a study of the Army Corps' beach engineering programs before and after the storm. What it found was unambiguous. Where the Army Corps was able to complete beach engineered projects, the dunes held. And the damage to communities behind the project was either negligible or manageable.

So here is a before and after photo at Surf City, which received beach engineering in 2007 as part of the U.S. Army Corps Long Beach Island Shore Restoration Project. You can see that despite the damage to the dune, the dune held. It saved lives, it saved property, it saved money. It made sense.

Alternatively, here is a photo of another part of Long Beach Island, in the Loveladies neighborhood that unfortunately did not have similar protections. It may not appear to be obvious damage, but when the surge came, washed away the undeveloped dune and flooded the homes you see along the beach, it pushed extraordinary amounts of sand into the neighborhood, covering the street and the entire area.

I would like to submit a copy of Stockton College's study for the record.

Senator BOXER. Without objection.

[The referenced material was not received at time of print.]

Senator MENENDEZ. We desperately need, Madam Chair, to provide the Army Corps the funding it needs to do not beach replenishment; this is about engineered beaches that save lives, save money, and stop us from repetitive loss. Our existing defense is, it is almost as if you are personally ill and your immune system is low. Right now, the urgency of now is critical. Because if we get a northeaster, based upon what we have suffered after Superstorm

Sandy, then the effects would be devastating to us. Our existing defenses from the storms have been greatly weakened. If a powerful northeaster hits New Jersey again, we could again see damage on an unbelievable scale.

And I just want to talk briefly, as part of one of the great industries of our State, that fishing industry that is along the New Jersey Shore, the reports we have gotten about the damage to commercial fishing industries have been devastating. There are long stretches of the shore where every marina, dock, and slip has been destroyed. And the boats moored to the infrastructure were launched onshore.

Here at Wagner's Marina in Keyport, just one example of how the boats were tossed into surrounding buildings, they lost over 5,000 feet of dock space, including electrical systems, catwalks, and gas lines.

So the need we have is enormous. We need the Federal Government as a partner to help us rebuild. And we need help not just rebuilding to the status quo, but to make sure that we are stronger, so the next storm—so that we don't have this type of devastation again.

I want to close with just, in the midst of all this incredible darkness, the resiliency and the light that sometimes comes in the midst of such adversity. There are so many stories. There is a story of the young woman in Hoboken who lived in a basement apartment who totally was flooded, lost everything. And instead of going ahead and thinking about what is my tomorrow all about, she spent the better part of a week at a shelter helping everybody else, even though she had nothing to go back to.

Or there is Pam Bond and Jeff Spinardi who own a candle shop called Greetings from Hoboken. They lost power along with everybody else on Washington Street; for over a week they were closed. The day they got power back, they opened the store, they made \$27 despite the fact that this is the busiest time of the year for them. And despite their own struggles with the store, they wanted to help others.

When they heard that the Hoboken homeless shelter was out of power and needed candles and found out the shelter had only one candle with which to light their whole process, Pam and Jeff donated hundreds of dollars' worth of candles to help them out. And now they are raising more funds for the shelter. This is the type of State that our people are ultimately about.

So I am asking each of our colleagues in the Congress to stand with us and help New Jerseyans recover and rebuild in our time of need, just as I personally, since I have been here, have stood with the people of the Gulf Coast after Hurricane Katrina, or the people of Joplin, Missouri, or crop destruction after a tornado ravaged a community. Because it is who we are, it is what we do as a country. And it is what truly gives the meaning to the United States of America.

Thank you, Madam Chairman.

Senator BOXER. Senator, thank you so much. And all of our speakers have been extraordinary. And I am going to, with your permission, include a lot of these photographs in our record. Is that all right with you?

Senator MENENDEZ. Yes, thank you very much.

[The referenced photographs were not received at time of print.]

Senator BOXER. And our last Senator to speak before we turn to our House colleagues will be Senator Blumenthal from Connecticut. We are so delighted you could be here, Senator. Go right ahead.

**STATEMENT OF HON. RICHARD BLUMENTHAL,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT**

Senator BLUMENTHAL. Thank you very much, Madam Chairman. I want to thank you and Ranking Member Inhofe for today's hearing.

And my colleagues, who have stated so eloquently what happened in New York and New Jersey, Connecticut, really shared their fate. Although the national media coverage may give the impression that Connecticut's damage was more a footnote to the main story, in fact the destruction and damage in Connecticut was every bit as real and the pockets of destruction as pervasive as elsewhere. I think many of the lessons learned that you have heard here form a pattern that we need to invest now or pay later, that there are measures we can take now to minimize the damage in the future, and we cannot be penny wise and pound foolish to avoid those measures going forward.

And the other lesson that I think is striking here is that our efforts have to be complementary, not competitive, that we are mutually supportive in this effort. I have been asked repeatedly, aren't you in competition with New Jersey and New York? The answer is very emphatically no. We are mutually supportive and reinforcing, as we are to responses that have been done to other disasters, whether they have been hurricanes or tornadoes or earthquakes around the country. We are united, as a United States of America, as Senator Menendez has said.

Hurricane Sandy's scale and scope of destruction made it one of the largest natural disasters to affect our nation, leaving millions of people in the tri-State region without homes or electricity and costing tens of billions of dollars in damages to governments, businesses, and residents. The sweep and depth of destruction and human impact and financial effect was simply staggering.

And our response now has to match its historic magnitude. We need to think big and act big with urgency and vision. Right away, short-term. We must redouble our efforts to reduce the personal cost and property damage of this storm and other storms. And longer view, the path toward enlightened protection and preparation must include infrastructure improvements. They may seem massive, but they are well needed and deserved, such as has been done with Stamford, Connecticut's floodgate repairs, steps to stop flooding on the Housatonic River, and electricity security measures, such as the establishment of micro-grids and increased availability of generators for various public and private facilities, especially for senior citizen housing.

In Connecticut, disasters like Hurricane Sandy are quickly becoming the new normal. The storm is the fourth major disaster for the State of Connecticut in the past 19 months. Record snowfall in January of last year, 2011, caused buildings to collapse. That spring, Connecticut incurred destructive floods, especially on the

Housatonic River, resulting from melting snow and tropical storm sized rainfall.

Later in 2011, Tropical Storm Irene and then a highly unusual October snow storm caused power outages that took more than a week to repair. And most recently, Sandy hit coastal towns with tropical storm force, combined with high tides and a full moon, winds and surges producing record high storm levels in the seas immediately surrounding the shores. And inland towns experienced significant widespread outages.

I want to thank the Committee for this personal insight, enabling us to provide some personal history. I was out in the storm, actually experiencing its ferocity and force, as I visited many of the emergency operation centers, and then afterward touring the State by land, by air, by sea as my colleagues have done. And most recently earlier this week with the Administrator of FEMA, Mr. Fugate. I saw in the immediate aftermath, as well as during these storms, the personal courage of our emergency responders. The city of Milford's fire department that performed 13 water rescues, the National Guard supported 73 assistance missions, our Governor responding with his excellent leadership. Eighteen State agencies, the Red Cross, the United Way, all coming together including our utility linemen and repair crews that worked tirelessly to restore critical electric power to homes and businesses.

And yet, I want to make clear that utility workers on the ground and in the field were once again heroes. But the utility management of the overall storm response was regrettably lacking in some regions. Although better than last year, it was still inadequate in key respects and areas. My many conversations with elected officials around the State indicated clearly that utilities need to better communicate with local authorities on the location and allocation of repair and tree removal crews in their communities.

Too often municipal leaders and emergency response crews were left in the dark, both figuratively and literally. The utilities, in addition, have to follow more closely the municipal electric utility model and provide at least one electricity restoration crew to each town, working with that town's public works department to remove live wires and allow the reopening of roads. They have to provide additional resources to restore electricity to the most critical areas of every town, which local officials know best.

I want to compliment President Obama. The response of the Federal Government was quick and decisive. And personal visits by the Secretary of Homeland Security, Janet Napolitano, as well as Administrator Fugate, were extremely important in calling attention and gathering information so that the Federal Government could assist very directly and immediately in this disaster recovery.

The total amount of damages is very preliminary but dramatic. Public infrastructure needs are in the tens of millions. And these estimates do not even take into account the possible public infrastructure damage that FEMA may be unable to reimburse due to the lack of flexibility within the hazard mitigation program.

We have built our infrastructure to 100 year storm levels. Unfortunately, the 100 year storm seems to be happening about every year. We have to be prepared for this new normal by hardening critical infrastructure and taking the time and spending the money

to conduct the infrastructure assessment that Senator Schumer spoke about doing. This kind of studied and streamlined approach is absolutely what needs to be done.

And as we continue to fund infrastructure improvements, the Federal Government should consider how such improvements may mitigate future water related damage and future taxpayer costs for restoration. One point here is that FERC continues to encourage transmission line redundancy and strengthening. But it should also consider similar initiatives for local backup power sources. I note that ISO New England has just applied to FERC for a 9.2 percent increase in its budget. The regional transmission authority, ISO New England, should devote some attention to the needs in this area. I question whether this 9 percent budget request is justified and deserves certainly serious attention, which I believe Federal agencies should give it.

In response to mounting advocacy, including my own, Connecticut is investing in micro-grids. A micro-grid, or distributed generation, allows communities to generate electricity from many small sources instead of just a few big ones. And these micro-grids offer an antidote to mass blackouts after storms. I am hoping that both FERC and ISO New England can be positive and active partners in the promotion of micro-grids.

Generators for senior citizen facilities have to be considered. I visited a number, one in Preston, encountered a similar problem in Franklin, Connecticut. These kinds of micro-grid and electricity restoration efforts are necessary to meet the needs of our vulnerable populations. Again, FERC should work with utilities to provide incentives and even mandates for bulk purchase of mobile generators that could be transported to these facilities on an as-needed basis as well as permanent generators in other residential facilities.

I have more that I could say. I ask that my full testimony be entered into the record.

Senator BOXER. Without objection.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. But finally, let me just say, Stamford offers an example of what I think you have heard from a number of my colleagues about the use of hurricane barriers. In Stamford, a 17 foot barrier, which blocked an 11 foot storm surge from Sandy, was built in 1969, and helped prevent about \$25 million in damage to businesses and homes during Sandy. Stamford is waiting for Federal funding of less than a million dollars to replace the barrier's pumps that had to be operated manually during the storm. An investment of less than a million dollars would ensure a saving of \$25 million in avoided recovery costs.

Similarly, the Army Corps of Engineers should and must take an increased role in flood mitigation efforts, especially along the Housatonic River, where there has been repeated flooding as a result of these past storms. Review and responsibility begins with the Army Corps of Engineers, but Congress can help support and move forward this vital work.

Flood studies will help identify how the State can be better prepared and equipped for these storm surges along the Five Mile River in Fairfield and New Haven Counties, the Housatonic River, a variety of places around the State of Connecticut where we know

prevention works. We have seen it first-hand, and the investment now will avoid payment later.

Senator BOXER. Senator, I hate to rush you through, but I have all these House members waiting.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. I just want to finish by thanking you, Madam Chairman.

Senator BOXER. Absolutely.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. I hope that we can work together.

Senator BOXER. We will. We will.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Senator Blumenthal was not received at time of print.]

Senator BOXER. And as you leave, Senator, I just want to tell the House members, the purpose of this hearing today is to make a historic record of this storm. We can't have all your constituents here, you are their representatives. So we are going to put together a record of this hearing that we will actually give to each of you who made this record.

My own belief is that, I hope and I pray it will be a turning point in how we look at climate change, and that we begin to make the necessary improvements that all the Senators, and Senator Blumenthal was very specific, showing one example of where a million dollars can save \$20 million-plus. What is the point of us not listening to that?

And as we work on a WRDA bill, and some of you are on the House counterpart committees, we are going to address all of these issues as best we can, as early as we can, next year.

So here is where we are. I would like to thank Senator Blumenthal, I know you have other meetings. The order in which we are going to hear from people, considering who is in the room, so this is what we are going to do. Pallone, Langevin, Bishop, Cicilline, Representative Holt, Representative Harris.

So if you could just all come on up here, we will go in that order. I have given you each 2 minutes, but I will have a very soft gavel until you reach 3. As someone who spent 10 years in the House, I learned to speak in 1 minute. Remember? I remember those days. When I got to the Senate, the press came up to me one day and said, you have changed, you are so calm. I said, well, in the House I had to get to the end of my speech and just have 1 minute to express myself. Here I can work my way up to the ending.

So I know it is a great skill, but you are all really good at it. So we will start off with Representative Pallone.

**STATEMENT OF HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.,  
U.S. REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

Representative PALLONE. Thank you, Chairman, and thanks for having this hearing and inviting us from the House.

My district was very hard hit by the storm, and I really wanted to just focus on a number of critical issues that have come to light that I think we must address as we move forward. I am not going to talk so much about what happened, but what we need to do over the next few months and year.

First I wanted to say, there is a great need for more temporary housing alternatives. I have thousands of people that have lost

their homes. They have to actually reconstruct or rebuild their home. It is not just damage. And we have now some temporary housing that is being set up at Fort Monmouth, which is a closed Army base. But we really need trailers and mobile homes. Many of the mayors have requested those and are willing to accommodate them. They haven't arrived yet. But I want to mention that that is a priority.

Additionally, we need FEMA to provide emergency funds to the Army Corps of Engineers so they can repair breached dunes and replenish beaches to protect the damaged areas from future storms. You heard from Senators Menendez and Blumenthal, where there was a dune, where there was a seawall, where there were replenished beaches, the damage was less. Those need to be put back again.

I have also requested that FEMA waive the 25 percent State-local match for public assistance repair work. Many municipalities in my district, some of which are very small, do not have the resources to contribute. I have some towns that have less than 1,000 families. They can't meet that 25 percent match.

It is also critical for funding to be made available for homeowners to pursue buyouts or grants to raise their homes in areas that flood frequently. We have some areas which have flooded three times now. Basically a buyout would make sense rather than trying to put the homes back again.

The Secretary of Commerce has declared a fishery disaster, due to the impact of Sandy, but that should include both commercial and recreational fishing communities. Fish processors, charter boat operators, marinas, tackle and bait stores, and other fishery related businesses have lost their equipment, infrastructure, and expected revenues. So Congress must make sure funds are allocated for fishery disaster assistance, so these individuals and businesses can receive relief.

I met with FEMA Administrator Fugate, and I noted when I met him that small business failures, he says small business failure rates after a major disaster can exceed 70 percent. So I believe we must also work to avoid this by expanding CDBG grants to assist small businesses facing damage from the storm, and would also like to see CDBG grants available for homeowners whose insurance or FEMA grants did not provide enough funding to rebuild, something I am asking you to look into.

Finally, obviously we have to continue to work in a bipartisan manner. I would like to see a robust supplemental appropriations passage in the lame duck, rather than wait to the new session. And I know that you are going to work with us to try to accomplish that.

Senator BOXER. Yes, and many of the things you said obviously deal with the supplemental. And I will of course work with my colleagues on Appropriations.

Thank you very much, Representative Pallone. As colleagues leave the table, my new arrivals, please take their spot. We will move ahead. We are making a record here, a record of Sandy.

Representative Langevin, thank you for being here.

**STATEMENT OF HON. JIM LANGEVIN,  
U.S. REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE STATE OF RHODE ISLAND**

Representative LANGEVIN. Thank you, Chairman Boxer.

Thank you for the opportunity, Chairman Boxer, to testify here today. I want to thank you for having me here today to provide a local perspective on Hurricane Sandy. I am pleased to be here with my colleague, Congressman Cicilline, as well, as we talk about the impacts to Rhode Island.

Hurricane Sandy was obviously a devastating storm for much of the Northeast, as we all know, with some portions of the region still recovering and others that are forever changed. As Rhode Islanders know all too well, the so-called 100 year storms are becoming more frequent, providing a stark reminder that climate change is occurring, whether we like it or not.

While I sincerely hope that superstorms like Sandy are not becoming the norm, it is incumbent upon all of us to take action to mitigate future vulnerabilities. I must say that both before, during, and after Hurricane Sandy, our first responders performed above and beyond our expectations, and utilities and other stakeholders across Rhode Island were laudable in their preparation and responses to Sandy.

However, being prepared means more than just having emergency response procedures in place. As we restore our infrastructure, we must also build strong coastal ecosystems that help protect our communities from storm surges and flooding. I certainly echo those requests outlined by Senators Reed and Whitehouse in their testimony when they spoke earlier today.

Our communities have shown tremendous strength and generosity in the wake of Sandy. Our Federal and State agencies were well prepared, organized, and responsive. But a full recovery in Rhode Island and elsewhere will require continued application of Federal resources in the current fiscal year and beyond, as well as prudent and careful planning in order to meet the needs of our communities.

In that regard, Chairman Boxer, I look forward to working with this Committee to help families and businesses in Rhode Island and the rest of the region affected by Sandy to recover and rebuild in the wake of this disaster. I thank you again for the opportunity and I look forward to working with the Committee.

Senator BOXER. Yes, and we look forward to working with you.

We are going to hear from Representatives Bishop, Cicilline, Holt, Harris, and Pascrell, in that order.

Representative Bishop.

**STATEMENT OF HON. TIMOTHY BISHOP,  
U.S. REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE STATE OF NEW YORK**

Representative BISHOP. Madam Chair, thank you very much for inviting myself and my colleagues from the House to testify before your Committee today.

I want to start with a comment that you just made with respect to the imperative that we move a WRDA reauthorization bill as quickly as possible. Because I believe that many of the challenges facing the First District of New York, which I represent, can and would appropriately be addressed in a new WRDA authorization

bill. I hope the House can meet you halfway in approving a bill as early as possible in the new Congress.

As your Committee moves to consider measures to help affected States deal with the aftermath of such as massive storm as Sandy, I would like to offer the following suggestions to ease the burden on our State and local governments. First, we should waive the local cost share for Corps projects that were adversely impacted by Hurricane Sandy. In the recent past, Congress has authorized Corps projects at Federal expense in response to significant national or regional challenges.

In my view, the challenges facing our communities warrant such a change today. Similar to the suggestion I offered when the House considered the Recovery Act in 2009, I will continue to advocate for a limited and appropriate cost share waiver as the Ranking Member of the Water Resources and Environment Subcommittee in the House.

We should authorize a renewed commitment and investment in hurricane and storm damage reduction projects that provide invaluable storm protection for families of all socioeconomic levels in my district. In this light, I applaud the first steps taken by this Committee and you, Madam Chair. I understand you are working very closely with incoming Ranking Member Vitter in a draft Water Resources Development Act. In addition, we must ensure funding is wisely allocated to storm damage reduction solutions that have demonstrated successes, such as the dunes in the West Hampton Beach area of my district, and protect the inner bay ecology along the south shore.

Finally, we should provide robust funding for the hazard mitigation grant program to ensure that cost effective projects that will reduce or eliminate the losses from future disasters are able to move forward with State and local support. While providing Federal support for recovery costs in affected areas is absolutely critical, a strong hazard mitigation grant program will save money in the long term and make our communities more resilient.

I look forward to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle and in both chambers to expedite these and other measures to rebuild and restore our communities in a fair and equitable manner. I yield back and thank you very much.

Senator BOXER. Thank you, Congressman. It was a pleasure to work with you on the highway bill, and I look forward to keeping that progress going with WRDA.

To our colleagues who are just walking in now, I want to welcome you all here. So you can see, we don't have a large enough table, but the next—I think it was Representative Grimm who came in next, I am not sure. Please take a seat.

We are going to go in the order of arrival. What I want to say here is, we are making a permanent record of what happened. You are the eyewitnesses, really, telling us the stories and also giving us ideas, as you have done, for what we should put in our WRDA bill. I am very pleased that you all took time. I know you are all very busy and have lots of places to be.

So although I gave you 2 minutes, I am going to add another minute on, because I know even though you are used to speaking in one moment, I think 3 minutes would be what you need.

So we are going to proceed, Representative Cicilline followed by Representative Holt.

**STATEMENT OF HON. DAVID CICILLINE,  
U.S. REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE STATE OF RHODE ISLAND**

Representative CICILLINE. Thank you, Chairman Boxer, for this opportunity to appear before you today with my colleagues.

I want to begin by recognizing the incredible strength and resilience of those whose lives were affected by this storm, especially along the Rhode Island coastline, where there was moderate to major flooding. I want to particularly applaud the efforts of our State and local first responders, Rhode Island National Guard, and the Emergency Management Agency, our public works and highway employees, National Grid and our other utility providers, and the many others who have been working relentlessly in the recovery effort.

I also want to recognize the collaboration that was demonstrated in our State across every level of government. In particular, the leadership of our Governor, Lincoln Chafee, and our mayors and town administrators. At every step of the way, we had the assistance of the Federal Government, helping inform, prepare, and assist Rhode Islanders.

Now, Congress has the responsibility to ensure that our communities can rebuild as quickly and effectively as possible. We need to act expeditiously in providing additional disaster relief.

At the same time, I think this is an appropriate moment to assess potential reforms. I thank you for convening this hearing to address some of these issues.

There are two issues that I heard most frequently during both Hurricane Sandy as well as Hurricane Irene, which I would like to bring to your attention. First is from small business owners, particularly those from economically challenged neighborhoods and small individually operated shops and businesses with just one or two or three employees. These small businesses face a particular set of challenges that often preclude them from taking advantage of SBA disaster loans, even with reduced interest rates.

I invite this Committee—and I will do the same on our side as a member of the House Small Business Committee—to assess the possibility of providing direct financial assistance to these truly disadvantaged small business owners, either through grants or hybrid of up front grants followed by super low interest loans. We can establish stringent eligibility criteria and accountability mechanisms, but we need to attempt to get targeted relief funds to those small businesses that sometimes face insurmountable hurdles following a disaster.

The second issue which was raised to me during tours of recovery sites after the storm is that as we invest in the restoration of highways, bridges, and infrastructure to pre-disaster conditions, we should not be penny wise and pound foolish. We need to maximize the efficiency of this funding, and obviously look at the waiver of the local cost share. But we also need to ensure that there are clear cost-benefit analyses performed that evaluates whether it would be advantageous financially, economically and in terms of future damage prevention, to provide for additional enhancements to this in-

frastructure beyond that of pre-disaster conditions alone, as current law provides.

Some additional improvements, as you know, are eligible, but in light of the estimates showing a rise in the number of future large scale disasters, now is the time to assess all options and determine whether or not the current limitations are too restrictive.

I thank you for the opportunity appear before you today and look forward to working with you and other members of this Committee as we continue to address these issues for our constituents.

Senator BOXER. Thank you. And I think you underscored a lot of the points that were made, that we can't rebuild the way it was built before. That is just a waste of money. We have to prevent the damage in the future.

I had a similar thing in an earthquake when our bridge failed, the bay bridge. It was horrible, just broke right off. And there was a big debate on the floor of the Senate whether we should rebuild it the way it was or make improvements. Clearly, it was the approach that failed to the bridge, and we prevailed. But it was a big argument. It shouldn't have been an argument. It doesn't make sense to rebuild it the way it was built, since we now know it can fail.

Anyway, all these things that you are saying to me today are very important. It is a pleasure to have all of you here, and I call on Representative Holt.

**STATEMENT OF HON. RUSH HOLT,  
U.S. REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

Representative HOLT. I thank the Chair for holding these hearings and inviting us.

I thank and appreciate the work of FEMA under Director Fugate and all the workers who came from all over New Jersey and all over the United States to help protect and assist the many people in New Jersey affected by the storm.

I join Representatives Pascrell and Pallone and Bishop and Langevin and others in what they are requesting. But the point I want to make is today we must consider more than just repairing the damage from Sandy. In recent years, we have experienced in various parts of New Jersey unprecedented floods, winds, rains, tidal surges. Not just Katrina, Irene, Floyd, Sandy, but again and again. The next storm will be different from Sandy only in detail. These unprecedented storms are the new normal.

And deniers of climate change notwithstanding, we are deluding ourselves if we think we are not experiencing climate change. We must not simply replace the structures damaged by Sandy. We have to build resilient infrastructure to withstand tomorrow's superstorms. We must build for the new normal.

That means significant investment in power engineering and transportation engineering and rail engineering and wireless engineering and shoreline engineering and river flood control, in planning and residential building and other efforts to strengthen our infrastructure. All in addition to taking as aggressive steps as we can to bring climate change under control as best we can.

So just as strengthening levees was part of the emergency supplemental spending for Katrina, so infrastructure strengthening

should be part of the response to Sandy. I can't emphasize this too strongly, I am sure that the Chair understands this, and again, I thank you for giving us this time.

Senator BOXER. Thank you so much, Congressman.

We will turn to Representative Harris, followed by Pascrell, Engel, Grimm, and Courtney. And I think that will be our group.

Please proceed, Representative Harris.

**STATEMENT OF HON. ANDY HARRIS,  
U.S. REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE STATE OF MARYLAND**

Representative HARRIS. Thank you very much, Chairman Boxer, for the opportunity to provide brief testimony on the impact of Hurricane Sandy on the area I represent.

The First Congressional District of Maryland includes all of Maryland's eastern shore, much of it only a few feet above sea level. Somerset and Worcester Counties and particularly the communities of Crisfield, Smith Island, Marion, Fairmont, Diehl Island, Ocean Pines, and Princess Anne were particularly hard hit with flood, wind, and rain damage from Hurricane Sandy.

While these communities continue to recover, our thoughts and prayers certainly go out as well to our neighbors from New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Connecticut, Rhode Island, and other areas where today's heartfelt testimony showed just how lives and businesses of families were disrupted as they dealt with this massive property loss.

On October 31st I toured the affected sites in Crisfield and Ocean City with Governor O'Malley and FEMA and local officials to see first-hand the serious impact of the superstorm. The Army Corps beach engineering projects really protected Ocean City from major damage. It was good to see, because that is an investment we have made over the years.

I was nonetheless stunned to see the devastation to some of our communities like Crisfield and to see what they suffered.

Madam Chairman, 3 weeks after the events last week, all Americans watched thousands of families eating Thanksgiving dinner in a shelter, never to return to their homes. And that is something that we will live with, and we will deal with. And Senators Gillibrand and Menendez suggested, though, the worst of nature turns out the best in people. It is so encouraging to see citizens, a lawyer in Crisfield like John Phebus, who now spends his days organizing hundreds of volunteers and coordinating them helping their neighbors recover.

Last week I hosted a tele-town hall meeting with over 1,000 residents from the impacted communities. I was very encouraged by the Federal and State coordinated response efforts to date. But Madam Chair, one message I heard loud and clear is that a few citizens still have an understanding of the different responsibilities of the Federal, State, and local governments as they respond to disaster and recovery, which does underscore the need for all levels of government to be prepared for these catastrophes in the future, ensuring that scarce resources can always be made available to those parts of our community most in need of assistance.

Madam Chair, I want to thank you for holding this important hearing of record.

Senator BOXER. I want to thank you very much.  
 And again, you are the eyes and ears for so many people who can't fit in the room. So thank you very much.  
 And now we will turn to Representative Pascrell.

**STATEMENT OF HON. BILL PASCRELL, JR.,  
 U.S. REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

Representative PASCRELL. Chairman Boxer, thanks for putting us together today and listening.

This was an epic storm, and it needs an epic response. I hope it does not get caught up in the debates that we are having in both the House and the Senate on how best to face this fiscal cliff that we all read about and talk about. Because that would be very dangerous to the people, not only of the State of New Jersey, but the other States and metropolitan areas of the tri-State area.

We are working with members of the Ways and Means Committee, as a member myself, to draft legislation modeled after other epic storms, which would bring some tax relief. Allowing businesses to expense the cost of disaster recovery is critical when we see how many businesses have been wiped out. Helping rebuild damaged low income housing and providing help and financing the momentous task of rebuilding infrastructure.

What we have now in FEMA is not good enough for the loss in small businesses. It just is not. We don't need low interest loans. What we need is a new addressing of the major problem. Small businesses are not satisfied with low interest loans at this point. It is beyond that. It needs to be responded to, and I hope this legislation will do that.

You take a look at Bergen County in the Ninth Congressional District. Two towns were wiped out when the Hackensack River rose above its berm. Monacy police department, there isn't any. And we are trying to get Federal funding, matching funding to bring in trailers for that town, and I think we are going to accomplish it.

The mayor of Littlebury had his house wiped out, almost lost his wife. This is a tragedy beyond words, certainly my words. It will be in the hands of the Federal Government and bipartisan groups like the one before this Committee today to step in and help rebuild. This is critical. We need to review our grid. And Senator, this is very important, it is not only important for New Jersey and the metropolitan area, but the grid is not doing what it is supposed to do. It is a homeland security issue, no question about it. We have substations wiped out because they are not placed in the right place, which puts everybody out of power in the immediate area.

These substations have been compromised, not only in New Jersey, but in other States across the Union. So this is a homeland security issue, whether it is man-made or God-made, it doesn't matter, we need to respond to it.

I will conclude by saying to you, Senator, and you know exactly what I am talking about, we cannot catch this up in the discussion that we are having in terms of responding to the economic plight of this country. We cannot, or else we will miss out, and we will have a million excuses.

Thank you very much for having us.

Senator BOXER. Representative, I couldn't agree with you more. We have had Republicans before us, Democrats before us. If we can't come together and help the people who were so harmed, and we get this caught up in our other disputes and problems, shame on us. People will watch it, and people see it. We can't do that.

There are certain things that are way above politics. This superstorm is one of those things, it is way above politics.

Representative PASCRELL. It wasn't easy after Katrina, either, you know that, Senator. There were a lot of debates about that. And when we look back on it, I hope some of the folks who were obstacles are ashamed of their behavior. These people had nothing as well. If we can't rise up above our political ideologies, then we don't belong here.

Senator BOXER. Well, I think we are going to. I feel confident of that. And I ask unanimous consent to enter into the record statements by Senator Mikulski and Representatives Nita Lowey, Peter King, Rosa DeLauro, Joe Runyon, and Frank LoBiondo.

[The referenced statements were not received at time of print.]

Senator BOXER. I am happy we have been joined by Representative Smith. We will in this order continue. I want to say for those who just came, we are making a record, sort of an eyewitness account of what happened with Sandy. We are also using your testimony as a way to guide us as we write the water resources bill, which will deal with flood control and prevention.

So the order now is Engel, Grimm, Courtney, and Smith.

Congressman Engel, the floor is yours.

**STATEMENT OF HON. ELIOT ENGEL,  
U.S. REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE STATE OF NEW YORK**

Representative ENGEL. Thank you, Madam Chairman, and let me say it is nice to see graduates from the House doing so well in the Senate. Thank you for having us.

[Laughter.]

Senator BOXER. I don't know if I graduated, I left.

Representative ENGEL. As you know, I represent New York's 17th Congressional District, which includes parts of the Bronx, as well as Westchester and Rockland Counties, just north of New York City. Sandy is the largest tropical system ever recorded in the Atlantic. Her winds stretched 1,100 miles from end to end, and she was brutal from the very beginning. Sandy killed at least 69 people in the Caribbean, including 54 in Haiti and 11 in Cuba, and then on October 29th, she crashed ashore in the United States.

By the time it was done, Sandy had taken 131 American lives, which included 53 New Yorkers. In just the New York City region, Madam Chair, which you know well, 305,000 homes were destroyed or damaged, 2.4 million residents lost power. A transit system carrying more than 8 million daily riders was forced to shut down. Thirty-seven health care facilities housing more than 6,000 patients were forced to evacuate. Two thousand miles of roads were damaged, and 11 tunnels were flooded.

The total economic losses from Sandy have climbed up over \$70 billion and are still accumulating. It is now the second most expensive storm in U.S. history after Hurricane Katrina. In the face of unimaginable destruction, what has been inspiring and heartening

is to see so many citizens from nearby neighborhoods and across the country pitching in with relief efforts.

FEMA's work has been admirable, more than 231,000 New Yorkers have contacted FEMA, and nearly \$680 million in assistance has been approved. The Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service has distributed 1.1 million pounds of household sized USDA food.

But obviously, as my colleagues have said and as you have said, Senator, much more needs to be done. We must provide much more recovery funding to the region. In 2005 we approved \$58.1 billion to help Gulf States recover from the effects of Hurricane Katrina. A similar effort must be made for those impacted by Sandy.

In addition to recovering from past destruction, we must also look to prepare for the future. We are likely to experience more storms of Sandy's magnitude, and we are not ready—sadly, we are not ready.

To adequately prepare, first of all, we must build a better grid. A storm the size of Sandy would stress even the most resilient electrical grid, but that is not the grid we have. We still depend on 20th century technology to power a 21st century economy. We must also bury power lines. Just 18 percent of U.S. distribution lines are underground. Burying them could make a tremendous difference. Some of my constituents in Scarsdale and Rye and Larchmont had to wait 2 and 3 weeks before they could get power. This is unacceptable.

We must continue to fully fund FEMA and review its practices to make sure it is performing as efficiently and effectively as possible. We must build better infrastructure. America spends just 2.4 percent of its economy on infrastructure, compared with 5 percent in Europe and 9 percent in China. If we are to have a 21st century economy and live in the real world, this 2.4 percent is not sustainable and not acceptable.

We must also accelerate replacement of natural gas pipelines. During Sandy, leaking gas fueled hundreds of fires, including blazes that destroyed hundreds of homes.

And finally, as you have mentioned so eloquently, Senator, we must stop ignore climate change. I serve on the House Energy and Commerce Committee. The science is clear, cutting carbon emissions over the long term is key to reducing the risks from extreme weather.

So I thank you for the opportunity to testify. I look forward to working together to help our fellow Americans heal from Hurricane Sandy and to ensure that we all better prepared for similar storms in the future.

Thank you so much.

Senator BOXER. Thank you, Representative.

And now we go to Representative Grimm. Welcome.

**STATEMENT OF HON. MICHAEL GRIMM,  
U.S. REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE STATE OF NEW YORK**

Representative GRIMM. Thank you, Madam Chairman, I very much appreciate the invitation to speak before this Committee today.

I very proudly represent Staten Island and Brooklyn. Staten Island was one of the hardest hit areas of all of New York City. I was on the ground from the moment the storm started. The amount of devastation that I saw was unimaginable. Twenty-four Staten Islanders lost their lives. Families lost everything. Homes were literally torn off their foundations. Some collapsed. Large boats, yachts, were scattered deep into neighborhoods and piled up onto people's homes.

More than 100,000 were without power, and for weeks people slept in a cold, damp home, apprehensive to move to a shelter because they were afraid of looting. The streets were dark, they were littered with what was once their home and their personal belongings.

As a community and a city, we came together, and we cleaned up the surface rather quickly. But there are still much deeper and continuing challenges that remain.

Families are still in shelters. The need for housing is one of our top priorities. Others are struggling with FEMA and SBA to receive adequate assistance. There are health concerns. Fuel spilled into people's yards and homes. Raw sewage backed up and filled people's homes to the ceiling.

Homeowners are uncertain about EPA guidelines and not rebuilding their homes properly, leaving the houses at risk to be condemned later for mold, because they will be too sick to live in.

Now, I know we are going to meet these challenges. But in addition, we need to rebuild to prevent future disasters. We need to rethink our zoning laws. And we need to provide the Army Corps of Engineers with adequate funding so that we can fortify our coastline.

Sandy recovery is far from over. In fact, it is just beginning. The people of Staten Island have turned to us here in the Congress to help them rebuild and recover.

I think that if we here in this chamber do one-tenth of what the community did, came together as countrymen, as neighbors, as friends, if we can do even one-tenth of that, then I know we will be rebuilt stronger than ever.

With that, I yield back, and I thank you.

Senator BOXER. Thank you, Representative. Very eloquent testimony.

We are going to turn now to Representative Courtney. Welcome, sir.

**STATEMENT OF HON. JOE COURTNEY,  
U.S. REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT**

Representative COURTNEY. Thank you, Senator.

Again, the urgency of the situation was shown again this morning by the Federal Reserve, which had its reports in from the 12 regions around the country. The good news is 9 out of 12 regions were showing good signs of economic growth. The three that weren't were Philadelphia, New York, and Boston. And it was Hurricane Sandy which was identified by each one of the Governors as the reason why.

Again, we have to really hit the sweet spot here in terms of a good package to help this critical part of America to be part of a

strong time of economic growth. Again, it is so important to all the priorities that we face as a nation.

Eastern Connecticut, eastern Long Island Sound, which runs from Stonington, Mystic, I know an area that you visited with one of my predecessors, all the way to New Haven, has actually experienced four FEMA events in 2 years, going back to flooding in the spring of 2010, Hurricane Irene, Storm Alfred last year, and then Hurricane Sandy. In our area, because the breakwater from Long Island Sound actually doesn't extend all the way to the Stonington area, we experienced 90 mile per hour wind gusts that coincided with high tide. We saw flooding and physical destruction that actually exceeded the hurricane from 1938, which the old timers always said was the high water mark in terms of bad weather in Connecticut.

The only point I wanted to just share is that with these four events, again, these communities along the shoreline and in the interior, every single time the first responders in local government has risen to the challenge in terms of making sure that immediate first responder issues were met, the 75-25 reimbursement that comes from FEMA, again, given the fact that we have had repetitive, a series of storms, is really starting to affect the ability of these communities to maintain standard operations.

So for example, the city of New London, which is a very distressed municipality, again, did everything they had to do in terms of protecting lives. But they are now looking at a structural deficit that the expenditure triggered that is now going to put at risk possibly laying off firemen and police.

Again, President Obama's prompt declaration was much appreciated. Because that kind of took some of the doubt about whether or not spending money was going to rebound and boomerang against them. But the fact is, if we can look at that per capita threshold that triggers a higher reimbursement as we put this package together, the fact is these communities deserve that. They have experienced just a historic repetition of bad weather that is really now starting to hit bone and muscle in terms of the ability to provide basic functions for local government.

Thank you for holding this hearing, and I look forward to working with the Senate and the House bipartisan group to get the right response to this storm.

Senator BOXER. Well, Representative, thank you. As a former member of local government, there is just so many times you can go to the well. There is a small tax base there, especially coming out of a recession, where the receipts are down, and then this hits. I think you make an important point.

This Committee won't be dealing with a supplemental directly. But indirectly, we will, because so many of us, not myself, West Coast, although born on the East Coast, experienced this. They will get very involved in the supplemental. I think you make a very important point about local match. Thank you.

And Representative Smith, last but not least, the floor is yours.

**STATEMENT OF HON. CHRIS SMITH,  
U.S. REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

Representative SMITH. Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you so much for convening this very timely and important hearing.

Madam Chairwoman, hours after Superstorm Sandy made landfall in New Jersey last month, I met with victims, elected officials, and emergency responders to survey the damage of our coastal communities. I have about 20 that are right on the water. I saw the devastation to lives, homes, and businesses brought by this horrific storm. Matter of fact, in Manasquan, I walked with the mayor the day after. The smell of gas, natural gas, was so strong, so pungent that if any of us lit a match we would have had an explosion. And many homes did burn down to nothingness.

The courage, tenacity, and resiliency of the victims has been amazing. The stories of neighbors helping neighbors with breathtaking kindness, by providing shelter, food, and warm, dry clothing, are almost without number. People are at once heartbroken, devastated yet appreciative of the help that they are getting and what they have left.

One resident of Belmar told me the day after Sandy demolished his home, "I have lost everything, but at least I am alive." The first responders in the plethora of emergency management personnel deserve the greatest praise of all, risking their lives to ensure the safety of stranded families, and then working around the clock to mitigate suffering and damage. Sheriff Sean Golden of Monmouth County, the OEN Director and Tom's River Police Chief Michael Mastraonati, led—and others, and continue to lead with extreme effectiveness and vision.

The magnitude of the damage, Madam Chair, is startling. Yet I remain confident that we can rebuild in a smart and sophisticated way. Using the lessons learned from Hurricane Irene and now Sandy, we can take actions that will prevent this level of destruction and even contain the cost for the taxpayers when the next powerful weather event hits.

New Jersey's almost 130 miles of coastline was battered by severe wind, high waves, and rising ocean. We know that in most areas where the Army Corps of Engineers implemented robust renourishment projects, there was less damage than there would have been. Where the Corps built higher berms, they held back the water. Where there were low dunes, the water came flooding in.

For example, in Ocean County, where the Corps constructed high berms and widened beaches, damage to houses, businesses, and other infrastructure were significantly less than in towns where similar renourishment efforts had not yet begun.

The Corps projects proved themselves extremely worthwhile. I think we need to continue its work and rebuild where feasible.

Governor Christie, for his part, focused like a laser beam. His estimate is \$36.9 billion, a huge sum of money, but it is, I think, very, very well documented.

Preventing flooded homes and businesses is cheaper and more efficient than repairing them in a water breach. As such, we believe it is necessary—and our delegation is united on this—and cost effective for the Federal Government to provide the Corps with emergency funding to finish beach replenishment jobs that have already

been authorized, and then to look very carefully at those that are on the drawing board at the feasibility study level.

I thank you again and would ask that my full statement be made a part of the record. But we need to really unite and really go all out to repair and to help those people who have been so horrifically affected.

[The prepared statement of Representative Smith was not received at time of print.]

Senator BOXER. Without objection, we will put your full statement in the record.

Let it be noted that this was a bipartisan list of witnesses, and that all of us are saying essentially the same thing, which is that there was untold suffering, that we need to move forward in a united way to resolve this problem and meet the expectations of the people. And that we will step up and ensure that we rebuild, and we rebuild in a way where these things don't happen, that we keep in mind the fact that the local governments and the States are looking to us.

I am very hopeful that we can meet the expectations of the citizens of the region and also, frankly, the country. There is no one in this country, unless they are really lucky, that hasn't been touched by one of these natural disasters, whether it is this one or earthquakes, flood, fire, drought, whether it is inland, whether it is on the coast. This is the time and the moment that we come together.

I think it was shown by the Governor of New Jersey and the President of the United States, in the heat of a campaign, that we must set that all aside, and get this done. I really thank you for coming over. I know you had a busy, hectic day. We are going to put your statement into the record.

We are very pleased that you came. This hearing stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 12:10 p.m., the Committee was adjourned.]

[An additional statement submitted for the record follows:]

STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES M. INHOFE,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA

Thank you, Madam Chairman, for holding this very important hearing today. The EPW Committee has a long history of being actively engaged in oversight of recovery efforts and authorizing new projects and programs to aid those in need when these tragic natural disasters have struck our nation.

I have long been a proponent of disaster preparedness, as we have our share of natural disasters in my home State of Oklahoma. In the 105th and the 106th Congresses, I introduced the Disaster Mitigation Act, which amended the STAFFORD Act to authorize programs for pre-disaster mitigation and which, among other things, streamlined the administration of disaster relief. I am pleased to say that elements of my bill were captured in a House version that was ultimately signed into law.

"Superstorm Sandy" was a massively destructive storm that wreaked havoc on the eastern seaboard in late October. Many of my Committee colleagues' home States bore the brunt of this storm's impact, and many of our fellow Americans are still endeavoring to rebuild their lives following Sandy's devastation. My thoughts and prayers continue to be with those who have been affected, and I am sure the rest of the country's are as well.

The purpose of today's hearing is to gain a first-hand understanding of what transpired in the affected areas before, during, and after the storm. I want to thank my colleagues for joining us today: sharing your stories and the stories of your constituents will be invaluable in helping to inform the Committee's thinking on how to rebuild after this storm and how to prepare for these types of storms in the future.

As you know, Madam Chairman, the Committee has already begun to think about this very issue. Earlier this month, the Committee held a hearing on your draft WRDA bill where you announced the addition of an Extreme Weather and Disaster Mitigation section. My friend, Senator Lautenberg, shared shocking photos of the devastation in New Jersey and made an impassioned and compelling case for congressional action. I look forward to working with my colleagues on this Committee and in the Senate to find effective and thoughtful ways to address the long-term preparedness needs and resiliency of our nation.

However, I believe that Congress' first and foremost concern should be ensuring that those Americans impacted by this event have the resources they need to rebuild in the near-term. I was heartened to hear that President Obama has already instructed Federal agencies to ensure that red tape and bureaucracy will not stand in the way of recovery efforts. In a speech at the American Red Cross on October 30 he said, "So I want to repeat—my message to the Federal Government: no bureaucracy, no red tape. Get resources where they're needed as fast as possible, as hard as possible, and for the duration, because the recovery process obviously in a place like New Jersey is going to take a significant amount of time." I look forward to working with my colleagues to ensure that Congress and the Administration ensure the path to recovery is as smooth as possible.

Again, let me thank you all for coming today, and I look forward to your testimony.

