

# GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Executive Office of the Mayor

Office of Communications



## PRESS RELEASE

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## Mayor Gray Applauds the President's Signature of D.C. Disaster Declaration for Superstorm Sandy Damage

*District Now Able to Recoup Costs Associated with Sandy Response and Recovery*

**(WASHINGTON, D.C.)** -- Mayor Vincent C. Gray and the D.C. Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency (HSEMA) received word today from the White House that President Obama has approved the Mayor's request for a Major Disaster Declaration for Public Assistance for the District of Columbia to supplement recovery efforts resulting from the effects of Hurricane Sandy.

President Obama's approval means that federal aid will now be made available to help the District recoup some of the costs associated with response to the storm – such as debris removal; costs for emergency protective measures (fire, police, and emergency medical services); damage to roads and bridges, water control facilities, public buildings and contents and public utilities; and other eligible infrastructure and hazard-mitigation costs.

***"The District appreciates the President's decision to provide federal disaster aid, as it will defray some of the costs incurred while ensuring our residents, visitors and the federal workforce were safe and able to recover and get back to business quickly after Superstorm Sandy,"*** said Mayor Gray.

Sandy affected the District and much of the rest of the Mid-Atlantic and Northeast October 28-30 with sustained strong winds and heavy rains that caused significant damage – including damage to trees and electrical wires, power outages, street closures and other damage. The District and federal governments closed all offices and schools on October 29 and 30, and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) suspended all Metrorail and bus service during that period. The impact of the storm was significantly lessened by the District's pre-landfall emergency preparations and coordination of resources during response and recovery operations.

HSEMA and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) officials continue to assess Sandy's effects on the District, but initial estimates show the financial losses and costs for emergency response and repairs in the millions. FEMA said additional designations may be made at a later date if requested by the District and warranted by the results of further damage assessments.

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