

PATTY MURRAY'S WASHINGTON VIEW

U.S. Senator Patty Murray's Weekly Report to the People of Washington – December 10, 2007

Flooding: Working to Get Federal Aid for Washington State Residents Who Have Lost So Much

Over the weekend, I brought representatives from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the Department of Transportation, and the Federal Highway Administration to our state for a tour of the damage and destruction caused by last week's floods. The officials joined Governor Gregoire, Senator Cantwell, Congressman Norm Dicks (D-6th) and me on a helicopter and ground tour through Chehalis, Grays Harbor, and other affected areas.

On [our tour](#), I witnessed the pain so many families are experiencing as they piece together all that they have lost in the storm - from livestock, to personal belongings, to entire homes. I saw so many of our residents in despair, but I also saw the wonderful resiliency and generosity of the people of our state as well. I saw families from neighboring areas who had come to lend a hand in the recovery effort, and I witnessed even the most impacted families in good spirits when all seemed lost.

For these residents, there is a long and hard road to recovery ahead. However, thanks in part to the first-hand look we provided FEMA officials and to the Governor's excellent leadership in the aftermath of the storm - help is on the way. In fact, just yesterday, President Bush announced that Federal disaster aid will be available to individuals and businesses in Grays Harbor and Lewis counties. Individuals in these areas may be eligible for help with rent payments for temporary housing, medical care, funds to replace personal property, unemployment assistance, and low-interest loans to pay for repairs not covered by insurance.

To apply for federal assistance from FEMA, you can call **1-800-621-FEMA**. Or you can visit my website at <http://murray.senate.gov>. I have listed several important resources for state and federal support services on my home page.

As we move forward from this tragic storm, I will continue to focus on ensuring that the federal government provides the support our state's families and communities need to recover. I encourage anyone affected, or anyone who has family and friends in the affected areas, to visit my website to access vital contact information.

[Visit](#) my website now to get more information on disaster assistance.

[Watch](#) - I discuss the impact of last week's flooding.

Pictures from our tour: [pic1](#) | [pic2](#) | [pic3](#) | [pic4](#)

["Bush declares state's flooding a disaster"](#) - Seattle Times

Veterans: Asking Tough Questions at VA Confirmation Hearing

On Tuesday, General James Peake came before the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee for his nomination hearing to be the next Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). During the hearing I asked General Peake about his ability to stand up to the White House, meet the long term challenges of this war, help reduce veteran suicide rates, work with Congress to reform the VA disability system, and speed up the construction and opening of the Walla Walla, WA outpatient center and long term care facility. I will likely support General Peake's nomination, but I have made it clear that the true judgment of his ability will come a year from now whether General Peake has become the true advocate that our veterans deserve. [Details](#)

[Photo](#)

[Watch](#) – Q&A with General Peake

[Watch](#) – My comments supporting this nomination

["VA chief nominee runs into questions from Sen. Murray"](#) – Seattle Times

Hanford: Preserving Hanford's B-Reactor as A Monument to Communities Critical Role in History

On Wednesday (12/5), I applauded a decision by the Landmarks Committee of the National Park System Advisory Board to consider National Historic Landmark status for Hanford's B Reactor. Just two weeks ago, I toured the Hanford Nuclear site and spoke out about the need to preserve the B-Reactor facility as a monument to our nation's history and the sacrifices of the local community. [Details](#)

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