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**Washington, D.C.**  
2234 Rayburn HOB  
Washington, D.C. 20515  
(P) 202-225-4401  
(F) 202-226-0779

**Holland Office**  
184 S. River Ave.  
Holland, MI 49423  
(P) 616-395-0030  
(F) 616-395-0271

**Muskegon Office**  
900 Third St., Suite 203  
Muskegon, MI 49440  
(P) 231-722-8386  
(F) 231-722-0176

**Cadillac Office**  
210 1/2 N. Mitchell St.  
Cadillac, MI 49601  
(P) 231-775-0050  
(F) 231-775-0298

## Federal Highway Administration Releases \$2.4 Million for Storm Damage Repair

The Federal Highway Administration announced that it is releasing \$2.4 million to fund repair work on roads damaged by the severe storms and flooding that occurred over the summer.

U.S. Rep. Pete Hoekstra joined several members of the Michigan congressional delegation in July requesting that President Bush approve Governor Granholm's request that he declare the state a major disaster area due to the extreme weather.

Counties with submitted damage claims include: Allegan, Lake, Manistee, Mason, Missaukee, Osceola, Ottawa, Saginaw, and Wexford; the cities of Cadillac and Ludington; and the village of Harrietta. Typical damages include culvert failures with complete loss of the roadway embankment, embankment failures, debris deposits, shoulder washouts and pavement damage.

Hoekstra and his staff worked with the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) to expedite the five most critical areas of Mason County, which were approved. They also met with Mason County Road Commissioner Director Gary Dittmer and MDOT to revive the expedited process when it came to halt several times.

## LIHEAP: Heating Assistance Available for Qualified Families

Energy costs have been an added burden to many West Michigan families as they have been saddled with other financial challenges. Legislation recently enacted at the federal level increased the amount of funding available to Michigan's low-income families through the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP).

LIHEAP provides eligible families with assistance for their energy costs. Information about the program and the eligibility requirements can be found by visiting: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ocs/liheap/brochure/brochure.html>, [http://www.michigan.gov/dhs/0,1607,7-124-5453\\_5531-15420--,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/dhs/0,1607,7-124-5453_5531-15420--,00.html) or the LIHEAP Hotline at 1-800-292-5650.

## Medicare Prescription Drug Open Enrollment

Medicare beneficiaries have an opportunity to re-evaluate their prescription drug coverage during the open enrollment season that begins on November 15 and concludes on December 31. Medicare has sent out the "2009 Medicare & You" handbook to its beneficiaries. It describes the changes in the drug plans. The Medicare Web site, <http://www.medicare.gov>, provides individuals with the opportunity to compare plans based upon their prescription drug needs. Hoekstra encourages beneficiaries to take advantage of the opportunity to compare drug plans and select that which best meets their needs.

*For more information on Pete's activities in Washington, D.C. please visit <http://hoekstra.house.gov>*