



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Timothy M. Kennedy

## State Commits to Senator Kennedy to Provide Necessary Resources to Respond to WNY Blizzard

TIMOTHY M. KENNEDY January 7, 2014

| ISSUE: **STORMS, EMERGENCY SERVICES OR FEMA**

*Senator Kennedy closely monitoring state's response to WNY blizzard.*

*Kennedy has been in contact with municipal leaders within his district to monitor response and assess needs for state resources, and he is working with state Commissioner of Homeland Security and Emergency Services to relay local concerns and track state actions.*

BUFFALO, N.Y. – Senator Tim Kennedy, D-Buffalo, has been coordinating with the state on its response to the Buffalo blizzard. Kennedy, who has been in contact with municipal leaders within his district, spoke to the Commissioner of the Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services (DHSES), Jerome Hauer, to relay local concerns and track the state's storm response. Kennedy has been in regular contact with the Cuomo Administration throughout the day, expressing municipalities' needs for state resources to support their local storm response efforts.

“The state is working quickly to respond to this unprecedented storm,” said Senator Kennedy. “After relaying concerns I’ve heard from local municipal leaders, state officials – including the Commissioner of the Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services – gave me their commitment to provide Western New York with all necessary resources to respond to the blizzard. The state has activated the National Guard, and they are prepared to

respond to whatever may come our way. At the moment, the state's chief concern is flooding of the Niagara River, and they are responding accordingly. In the hours and days to come, we'll remain in close contact with the state to ensure local communities have the resources they need to effectively respond to this blizzard."

At the moment, flooding remains a major concern for the state. Ice breakers have been in the Niagara River to alleviate some of the flooding, and the state is monitoring the issue very closely. DEC is deployed along the river, and the state is putting extra boots on the ground to address flooding issues.

New York State has activated the National Guard, and they are ready to help with whatever is needed. The National Guard is prepared to help with evacuations, if needed. National Guard has emergency equipment available at the Niagara Falls Air Base, including heavy trucks and Humvees, if the need arises. They also have two shelters open and ready.

The state has concerns about the electric grid, and they are prepared to respond if a grid failure occurs. The state is asking large industrial consumers to scale back on usage so the grid isn't overburdened.

The district Senator Kennedy represents – which covers Lackawanna, Cheektowaga and much of Buffalo – has largely been the "epicenter of the storm." Municipal leaders have echoed that sentiment. Senator Kennedy will remain in contact with the Commissioner throughout the day.

Municipal leaders have asked residents to take travel bans and advisories seriously and to remain off the roads. In his conversations with state officials, Senator Kennedy also relayed concerns from municipalities about the inherent costs of major snow removal efforts, including overtime costs. The state has told Senator Kennedy that they are committed to

providing all necessary resources to Western New York communities.

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*Senator Timothy M. Kennedy represents the New York State Senate's 63rd District, which is comprised of the towns of Cheektowaga, the city of Lackawanna and nearly all of the city of Buffalo. More information is available at <http://kennedy.nysenate.gov>.*