



Andrew M. Cuomo –*Governor*

Governor Cuomo Expands NY Rising Program to Help 6,575 Homeowners Impacted by Extreme Weather Pursue Home Elevations

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Record Level of Assistance Provided Through Home Elevation Initiative

Albany, NY (July 30, 2014)

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo today announced that up to \$300 million has been made available through the State’s NY Rising Housing Recovery Program to support home elevations for 6,575 homeowners. Individuals eligible for this round of funding experienced damage to their homes as a result of Superstorm Sandy, Hurricane Irene or Tropical Storm Lee. The Optional Home Elevation and Mitigation Initiative is being offered in addition to other housing recovery assistance that has been made available through NY Rising.

“As we continue to adjust to the new normal of extreme weather, it is critically important that our communities are as safe and resilient as possible,” Governor Cuomo said. “That is why the state is stepping up to support home elevations for thousands of New Yorkers who were hit hard by Sandy – because we’re not just rebuilding from the damage that was done, but building back with the next storm in mind. This level of housing recovery assistance is unprecedented, and I am confident that it will go a long way toward creating a New York that is stronger, smarter, and safer than ever before.”

Office of Storm Recovery Director Jamie Rubin said, “The NY Rising Housing Recovery Program has encouraged homeowners to actively pursue and institute enduring solutions that can better protect life and property against the potentially-devastating impacts of future storms. Working to address, and respond to, the new realities of increased instances of extreme weather, the Optional Elevation and Mitigation Initiative

gives homeowners the opportunity to reduce future financial burdens, while furthering recovery and resiliency efforts following Superstorm Sandy, Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee.”

Nassau County Executive Ed Mangano said, “We learned many lessons as a result of this barrage of new extreme weather, and the steps that the State is taking to protect our residents from future storms are unprecedented. Expanding the NY Rising program is a critical component in minimizing the damage caused by these storms, especially in the Long Island area, which is especially vulnerable to rising tides. I applaud Governor Cuomo for providing exceptional leadership to this expansion, and for his guidance through this entire storm recovery.”

Suffolk County Executive Steve Bellone said, “The announcement today is yet another welcome one for New Yorkers in Suffolk County. Not only are we rebuilding, but we are completely rethinking what is necessary in order to protect ourselves and our neighbors so that when the next big storm hits, we will be ready—and we will bounce back quicker than ever before.”

Hempstead Town Supervisor Kate Murray said, “For two years, I have seen the resolve of people who decided to stay here after Hurricane Sandy in the communities they love. They are rebuilding their homes and their lives. Thank you Governor Cuomo for expanding the NY Rising initiative. As a result of your leadership, spirits are being raised as homes are being lifted in communities slammed by Sandy. Thank you!”

Freeport Mayor Robert Kennedy said, “Freeport and the South Shore of Long Island have gotten to know Governor Cuomo very well during and after Superstorm Sandy. Those were tough and difficult days for all of us, and it has changed this community forever. We want to thank Governor Cuomo and the state for all they did to help the residents in this community when Superstorm Sandy hit, and the days, weeks, and months that followed. Simply repairing our homes to their previous state can no longer suffice. With the funding from the NY Rising program and the support of our partners in the New York State government, we are building back and we are building back better.”

To date, the agency has issued 8,000 storm-impacted homeowners with more than \$350 million, helping communities throughout New York to recover from recent storms and build back even better than before.

Of the 8,000 households, 1,400 households being required to elevate their homes. Approximately 360 of the 1,400 have opted to undergo full-reconstruction, which will include elevation as part of the process. The remaining 1,020 homeowners will be awarded \$87 million to complete the mandatory elevation procedure. The State has provided \$15 million to 166 households from this group to date, who have already completed their elevations. The remaining 854 homeowners are currently in various phases of the initiative. Because the Housing Recovery Program distributes half of the funding upfront, with the other half coming after work has been completed, it has already disbursed \$36 million to homeowners with another \$36 million on the horizon.

As part of the undertaking, NY Rising covers the costs of required elevation to homes that are deemed “substantially damaged” and located within the 100-year flood plain. The program also pays for the optional elevation of houses that have not been substantially damaged, but that are located within the 100-year flood plain, as well as those that have been granted “repeated loss status” from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

Additional aid through the Interim Mortgage Assistance (IMA) program may be available to homeowners who must temporarily relocate during the elevation process. This undertaking aims to mitigate risks associated with the occurrence of dangerous weather, thereby ensuring that New York communities are better able to withstand upcoming storms.

Through the NY Rising Housing Program, the Governor urges all at-risk homeowners to get involved, prepare for what’s to come, and consider the significant benefits of home elevation, as we all work together to create a reimagined and reinvigorated New York.

The Governor’s Office of Storm Recovery (GOSR) was created to coordinate Statewide recovery efforts for Superstorm Sandy, Hurricane Irene, and Tropical Storm Lee. Through its NY Rising Housing Recovery, Small Business, Community Reconstruction and Infrastructure programs, GOSR invests more than \$4 billion made available through the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development’s (HUD) Community Development Block Grant - Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) Program to better prepare New York for future extreme weather events.

Congressman Eliot L. Engel said, “There’s an urgent need to prepare and protect our communities from flooding and other extreme acts of nature. Some parts of my District are still recovering from the devastating effects of Superstorm Sandy, but we cannot be

caught off guard by the next one. Keeping our homes safe, and out of the line of rising water is critical. I am pleased that Governor Cuomo has made funding available for home elevations.”

Congresswoman Carolyn McCarthy said, “In recent years New Yorkers have seen an increase in devastating storms and other extreme weather events. Providing residents with the funding to elevate their homes ensures that they are better protected from future storms. This funding is even more helpful for residents who are required by federal guidelines to raise their homes to comply with flood insurance requirements. We have come a long way, and although more still needs to be done, this funding will help to ensure that New Yorkers have the resources they need to recover and rebuild stronger than before.”

Congressman Gregory W. Meeks said, "Governors Cuomo's NY State Rising Housing Recovery Program is an essential resource for homeowners impacted by Super Storm Sandy and other tropical storms. Homeowners impacted by shifting flood plains, especially those in Nassau County, will be eligible through the Optional Home Elevation and Mitigation Initiative for federal assistance to elevate their homes and improve the home's resiliency. This \$300 million program along with the new flood insurance provisions I introduced to provide rebates to eligible policy holders whose premiums have risen, help communities, families, and businesses still recovering from the long process of rebuilding their livelihood."

Congressman Steve Israel said, "I proudly fought to secure federal money that will allow New York homeowners to elevate their houses to protect against future extreme weather. Flood mitigation efforts are key to protecting our homes and infrastructure. We need to use all the resources at our disposal to strengthen our coastal communities in this way."

Congressman Paul Tonko said, “Severe weather events in the past few years have caused untold damage to the lives and property of Capital Region homeowners, and we have to shift our strategy to a proactive approach instead of waiting to react to the next Storm of the Century. I thank Governor Cuomo for his attention to this urgent need in our communities and for addressing this issue in a way that will save taxpayer money down the road. Moving forward, the nation must follow New York's lead and act on the issue of climate change so that we put more of an emphasis on prevention and mitigation than recovery.”

Congressman Bill Owens said, "Communities in northern New York have been hit hard in recent years by extreme weather. Many have suffered damage to their homes or were temporarily dislocated due to these storms. I strongly support this effort to help our constituents limit the harmful effects of future natural disasters in our region."

Congressman Tom Reed said, "Helping New Yorkers not only rebuild but rebuild smarter with ways to get ahead of the next storm is an effective way to care for families hit hard by storms Sandy, Irene and Lee. Fair, cost-efficient initiatives that give homeowners the tools they need to protect themselves long term will act as safeguards against future loss of life and property."

Congressman Chris Gibson said, "Throughout much of my Congressional tenure, a major priority of my staff has been working with local, state, and federal officials to assist constituents with rebuilding in the wake of severe storms. I have personally visited each affected community to ensure I have a firsthand perspective on the challenges we are facing in reconstruction, mitigation, and prevention. The NY Rising Housing Recovery Program is a key component of the rebuilding effort, giving our neighbors the opportunity to safeguard against future flooding events."

Congressman Richard Hanna said, "This funding will help thousands of New York homeowners be ready when the next severe storm strikes. Taking preventative measures like these will increase the safety of New Yorkers and their properties, reducing future damage and financial burdens."

Congressman Sean Patrick Maloney said, "Our homeowners in the Hudson Valley were some of the hardest hit by Sandy, Irene and Lee and this is a classic 'stitch in time saves nine' investment that will help homeowners and communities rebuild stronger and safer while creating jobs and growing our economy."

Assemblyman Brian Curran said, "First and foremost, I want to thank Governor Cuomo, Jon Kaiman, and James Rubin for working so closely with my office, as well as Freeport Mayor Robert Kennedy, in order to help families rebuild and recover in the aftermath of Super Storm Sandy. The devastation throughout the Empire State--inflicted on this region was paralyzing. Homes were flooded, property was destroyed and the residents of this region were lost. By NY Rising expanding to raise thousands of more homes, we will not only be more protected, but live with a heightened sense of security, too. Together, we move towards full recovery."

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