



**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA**

MEMO

DATE: June 23, 2006

TO: House Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness Committee

FROM: Representative Dwight Evans, Chairman *Dwight Evans*
House Appropriations Committee

SUBJECT: Budget Request

JUN 23 2006

Thank you for your letter regarding the American Red Cross Extended Care Program in the 2006/07 General Fund Budget. As you know, the House has approved House Bill 2499, which now faces consideration by the state Senate. House Bill 2499 differs considerably from the proposal offered by Governor Rendell in February and will face more changes as we move through budget negotiations.

We are all concerned about the effect of Medical Assistance costs on the General Fund and face critical decisions on economic development, education costs and health care in general. At a time when rising fuel prices are affecting the cost of all consumer goods, we need to guard the interests of those who most need our attention. As House Democrats we will consistently make the tough choices in support of working families of Pennsylvania.

As discussions continue, I will seriously consider your request. Thank you for your input and if you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact my office.

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House of Representatives
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG

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HOUSE MAJORITY POLICY COMMITTEE
COMMITTEE ON COMMITTEES

DESIGNATIONS:

PENNSYLVANIA EMERGENCY
MANAGEMENT AGENCY COUNCIL

June 13, 2006

The Honorable Edward G. Rendell
Governor Of Pennsylvania
Room 225, Main Capitol
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Dear Governor Rendell:

In our capacity as members of the House Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness Committee, which has oversight for the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) and various emergency management programs, we respectfully request your support for the \$500,000 increase amended into House Bill 2499 for the American Red Cross Extended Care Program. This change restores the Extended Care line-item to the FY 2004-05 funding level of \$1 million and will allow the Red Cross to continue assisting victims of natural disasters throughout the Commonwealth.

Since its inception in 2000, the Extended Care Program has helped over 6,400 families recover from major disasters of all types, including fires, flooding, and collapsed buildings. Red Cross chapters across the state have helped these families to return to independent living in a timely manner, thereby avoiding the cycle of homelessness. This program is a prime example of what can be achieved by partnerships between the state and community-based organizations like the Red Cross.

The Extended Care Program includes assistance for minor home repairs, rent, lodging, food, transportation, day care, disaster prevention education, crisis counseling, referrals, and other services directly related to disaster recovery. The current funding level of \$1 million has enabled the Red Cross to provide statewide assistance to dozens of county and regional chapters—especially during the winter and spring when occurrences of fire and flood emergencies are highest.

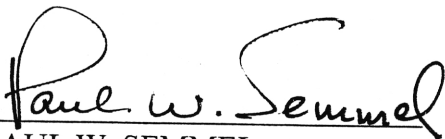
Failing to restore funding to the FY 2004-05 level would place a tremendous burden on the ability of the Red Cross to respond to the many demands it receives – especially during the winter and spring when the occurrence of fire and flood emergencies is the highest. Because funding was cut in FY2005-06, most emergency

funding has already been depleted. The prospect of another fiscal year without full funding means that thousands of Pennsylvanians would be without a vital resource to recover from unexpected and unforeseen disasters.

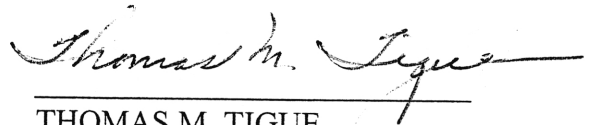
Thank you for the opportunity to offer our support for the Extended Care Program. As it was dramatically revealed during last year's devastating hurricanes, it is impossible to predict the impact of natural disasters; however, we know they happen every year without warning and without concern for the families they strike. And, it is the American Red Cross that most often helps families and communities to recover from these disasters.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. If you should wish to discuss this issue with the Committee, or any of our members, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,



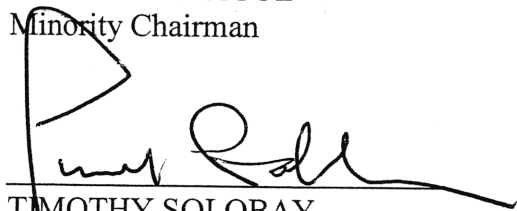
PAUL W. SEMMEL
Majority Chairman



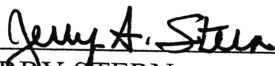
THOMAS M. TIGUE
Minority Chairman



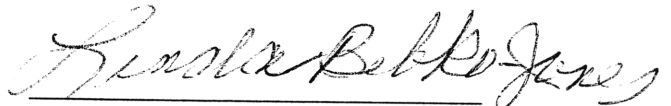
BOB BASTIAN
Subcommittee Chairman
Security and Emergency Response



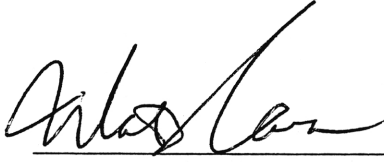
TIMOTHY SOLOBAY
Subcommittee Chairman
Security and Emergency Response



JERRY STERN
Subcommittee Chairman
Military and Veterans Facilities



LINDA BEBKO-JONES
Subcommittee Chairman
Military and Veterans Facilities



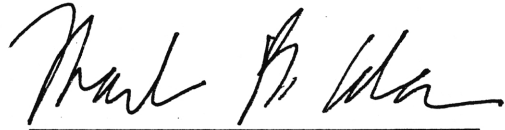
MARTIN CAUSER
Secretary



THOMAS CORRIGAN
Secretary



GIBSON C. ARMSTRONG



MARK COHEN



KAREN BEYER



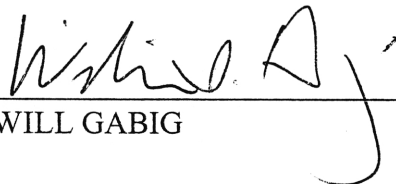
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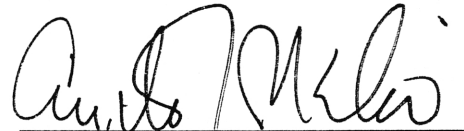
TERESA FORCIER



RICHARD GRUCELA



WILL GABIG



ANTHONY MELIO



SCOTT HUTCHINSON



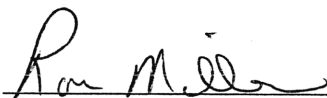
STEVE SAMUELSON



RONALD MARSICO




JOHN SIPTROTH

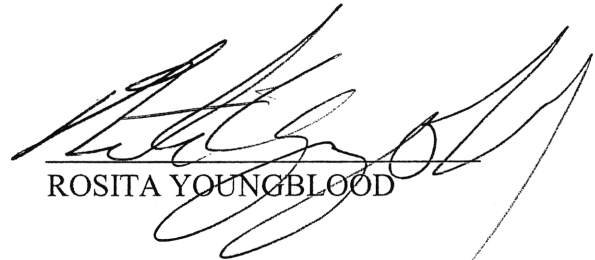


RON MILLER



THOMAS YEWIC

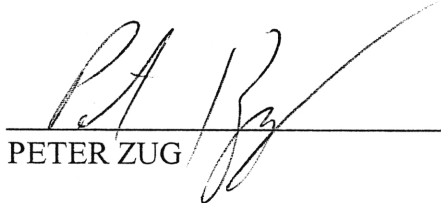

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BERNARD O'NEILL


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DESIGNATIONS:

PENNSYLVANIA EMERGENCY
MANAGEMENT AGENCY COUNCIL

January 31, 2006

The Honorable John Perzel
Speaker
PA House of Representatives
139 Main Capitol
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Dear Speaker Perzel:

In my capacity as Chairman of the House Veteran's Affairs and Emergency Preparedness Committee, I am writing to request a \$100,000 supplemental appropriation or grant for the American Red Cross' Statewide Extended Care Program. As you may know, funding for this program was cut by 50 percent in the 2005-06 budget. This decrease has adversely affected the level of services provided to families across the Commonwealth who have experienced natural disasters.

As we have witnessed in dramatic detail over the past year, natural disasters can have a devastating effect on families and communities. Extended Care Program, a program for Red Cross chapters across the state administered by the Southeastern Chapter, is designed to give families the extra help that prevents a secondary crisis. The primary goal of Extended Care is to help people resume their normal way of living as quickly as possible. The program includes assistance for minor home repairs, rent, lodging, food, transportation, day care, disaster prevention education, crisis counseling, referrals, and other services directly related to disaster recovery.

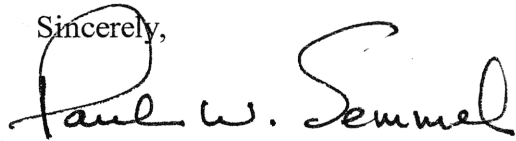
Nearly 40 local Red Cross chapters in more than 50 counties have helped over 2,300 families recover from major disasters since 2000. Their assistance has enabled individuals to remain close to their support systems of family, friends, community, churches, and schools. They avoid the shelter system, and generally return to independent living within 30 to 60 days, preventing long-term homelessness.

A tremendous burden has been placed on the ability of the Red Cross to respond to the many demands it receives since funding was reduced. Supplemental funding would allow the Red Cross to provide financial assistance to families,

particularly during the winter and spring when the occurrence of fire and flood emergencies is the highest.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul W. Semmel". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial "P".

Paul W. Semmel
Majority Chairman
Veterans Affairs & Emergency
Preparedness Committee

PWS/prh

cc: Representative Samuel Smith, Majority Leader
Representative Brett Feese, Appropriations Chairman

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COLUMN FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 17, 2005

Semmel Backs Funding for Red Cross Extended Care Program

By Rep. Paul Semmel (R-Lehigh/Berks)

As chairman of the House Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness Committee, I am working to see that the American Red Cross Extended Care Program will receive a \$500,000 increase in the 2005-06 state budget. This change would restore the Extended Care line item to the 2004-05 budget level of \$1 million and would allow the Red Cross to continue assisting victims of natural disasters throughout the Commonwealth.

I recently had the opportunity to visit a Red Cross shelter in Philadelphia for those who have lost their homes due to fire or other natural disasters. This facility gives those in need a safe place to live when disaster strikes. The facility provides a temporary living facility where disaster victims can move through the recovery process and regain their independence without having to become homeless. The facility also offers a full range of casework and supportive services all under one roof.

Since 2000, the Extended Care Program has helped more than 2,300 families recover from major disasters of all types, including fires, floods, and collapsed buildings. Red Cross chapters across the state have helped these families to return to independent living in a timely manner, thereby avoiding the cycle of homelessness. This program is a prime example of what can be achieved by partnerships between the state and community-based organizations like the Red Cross.

The Red Cross's Extended Care Program has been funded by the Commonwealth for several years through the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Association (PEMA). Through this program, the Red Cross has developed a track record of returning low-income families to self-sufficiency in a highly efficient manner. It is important that we help and show compassion to those who fall victim to disaster through no fault of their own. For minimal cost, the Extended Care Program has proven to be a successful means of getting people's lives back on track.

The Extended Care Program includes assistance for minor home repairs, rent, lodging, food, transportation, day care, disaster prevention education, crisis counseling, referrals, and

other services directly related to disaster recovery. The current funding level of \$1 million has enabled the Red Cross to provide statewide assistance to dozens of county and regional chapters- especially during the winter and spring when occurrences of fire and flood emergencies are highest.

Failure to restore full funding for the Extended Care Program would place a tremendous burden on the ability of the Red Cross to respond to the many demands it receives. That is why my committee will continue to urge Gov. Ed Rendell to increase this essential funding for Pennsylvanians in times of need. Red Cross chapters would be without a vital resource in their efforts to help families recover from unexpected and unforeseen disasters. This budget line item is a small investment which yields great returns for disaster victims statewide. I will work with legislators and the governor's office to ensure this funding remains in the final version of the 2005-06 budget.

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EJS/jab