



STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
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CHARLESTON, WV 25305
(304) 558-2000

EARL RAY TOMBLIN
GOVERNOR

January 27, 2014

Mr. Frank Skaggs, Director
U.S. Small Business Administration
Field Operations Center East
101 Marietta Street, NW
Suite 700
Atlanta, Georgia 30303-2725

Dear Mr. Skaggs:

Beginning January 9, 2014, the West Virginia-American Water Company curtailed service to over 100,000 customers in an area encompassing portions of nine counties in West Virginia. This was triggered by a chemical leak which affected about 300,000 residents—approximately one-sixth of the state's population. Due to a robust public and private response, the adverse effects of this incident have been minimized to the maximum extent possible. However, the lack of tap water has severely affected many of the businesses in Charleston, the capital city, and surrounding areas. The most severely impacted county, Kanawha, is also the most populous and the state's center of commerce.

As a result of this incident, President Barack Obama issued an Emergency Declaration for Direct Federal Assistance to the state and its citizens (FEMA-3366-EM-WV). However, the businesses that were forced to close or had substantially reduced income because they could not maintain acceptable sanitary levels or had reduced traffic due to citizens avoiding the area are not helped by this action.

State, local, and other organizations are beginning to develop information on the financial impact of this event that has caused significant business disruption to many businesses in the affected area. For example, many businesses that serve sports-minded customers had to be closed during the weekend of January 11-12, when there were four (4) National Football League playoff games in addition to other sporting events that would normally add to their attendance and resultant sales of food and drink.

Even after water service was restored, certain businesses, e.g., restaurants, were required to cleanse their facilities in order to meet requirements set by the appropriate local health department. Thus, businesses have suffered loss of revenue and extraordinary costs, and employees have lost wages due to this event.

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Based on the information developed thus far, I hereby certify that, in accordance with the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 13, Part 123.3, at least five (5) small businesses in Boone County, Kanawha County and Putnam County, West Virginia, suffered substantial economic injury as a result of the chemical spill that forced a curtailment of water service beginning on January 9, 2014, and continuing until January 17, 2014, in some areas. I further certify that the degree of economic injury is so severe that financial assistance at reasonable rates and terms is not otherwise available, thereby creating the necessity for federal involvement in the form of subsidized loans from the Small Business Administration.

Your assistance in expediting help for our small businesses and eligible private, non-profit organizations as they struggle to meet their financial obligations and pay ordinary and necessary operating expenses during the recovery from this unprecedented event is greatly appreciated. Should you need additional information, please contact Jimmy J. Gianato, the Director of the West Virginia Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management. Mr. Gianato may be contacted on 304-558-5380 (O), or at Jimmy.J.Gianato@wv.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Earl Ray Tomblin". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "E" and "R".

Earl Ray Tomblin
Governor