

November 13, 2012

The Honorable Jeffrey S. Chiesa
Attorney General
Office of the Attorney General
P.O. Box 080
Trenton, NJ 08625-0080

Dear Attorney General Chiesa:

Recent storms have placed a significant burden on New Jersey homeowners, leaving many without options to manage their housing challenges in the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy. More than 2.4 million people lost power as a result of the storm, and public infrastructure including roadways, rail lines, utility lines, government facilities, water treatment plants, and our shoreline, were severely devastated. This massive damage to our local communities comes just as New Jerseyans were rebuilding following the costly damage caused by Hurricane Irene.

As a result of this devastation, many homeowners have suffered damage to their homes or experienced a disruption in income as a result of Hurricane Sandy. We were pleased to see that Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae, after consultation with the Federal Housing Finance Agency, implemented the immediate and mandatory suspension of evictions and foreclosures on homes secured by Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae owned-or guaranteed mortgages in eligible disaster areas. However, those New Jersey homeowners whose mortgages are not backed by Government-Sponsored Enterprises (GSE) or insured by the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) are left without options to manage their housing challenges.

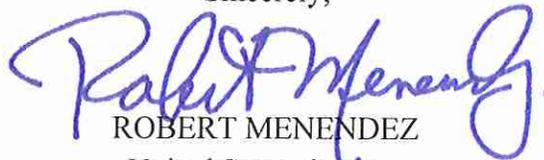
For these reasons, we strongly urge you to implement the following moratorium for all New Jersey homeowners who have suffered damage to their home or experienced a disruption in income as a result of Hurricane Sandy:

- Automatically suspend for 90-days foreclosure sales for borrowers with homes located in eligible disaster areas in order to determine the facts of their situation;
- Automatically suspend for 90-days evictions for borrowers with homes located in eligible disaster areas in order to determine the facts of their situation;
- Delay the initiation of any foreclosure action to determine the condition of the property and the borrower's employment and income status; and

- Waive any late payment charges for borrowers with homes located in eligible disaster areas and suspend credit reporting for any homeowner for whom relief is granted.

While there is clearly more work to be done, significant progress has been made to restore power and provide relief to those affected by the storm. During these difficult times, it will be important to ensure that New Jersey homeowners can focus on repairing and restoring their lives, and have viable options to give them the much needed time. We appreciate your time and attention to this matter, and look forward to continue working with you to recover, repair, and rebuild from this historic natural disaster.

Sincerely,


ROBERT MENENDEZ
United States Senator