

Culver: A Stronger, More Sustainable Iowa

Creating jobs and helping middle class Iowans return to a normal life is the goal Governor Chet Culver set out in his Condition of the State Address for completing the disaster recovery started last year. Culver asked that a “significant portion” of the \$100 million remaining in the I-JOBS program be used for flood recovery projects statewide.

Noting that I-JOBS is both a job creation and flood recovery effort, he highlighted some of the projects that benefited from the funding. In Linn and Louisa Counties, two of the harder hit areas of Iowa, there are currently 54 I-JOBS projects underway, for a total investment of nearly \$95 million. In Butler County, where Parkersburg was hit by the F5 tornado, there are 14 I-JOBS projects at close to \$3 million. The communities of Charles City and Elkader will have new fire stations to replace ones damaged by flooding.

I-JOBS dollars also leveraged additional federal funds. The \$100 million for flood recovery at the University of Iowa helped secure nearly \$750 million in additional federal disaster funds. This will help rebuild more than a dozen campus buildings destroyed by the floods, including Hancher Auditorium.

The Governor also noted that the Rebuild Iowa Office, under the leadership of Lieutenant General Ron Dardis, was recently recognized as being a national model for effective flood recovery. He praised the office for helping Iowa secure over \$3.6 billion in state and federal money to help Iowans rebuild from floods and tornadoes. As an example, he said 3,000 Iowans, who lost their homes, are now guaranteed the funds necessary to buy a new one. The Governor would like to see full funding for the Rebuild Iowa Office.

Resilience of Iowans

Governor Culver stressed that the people of Iowa are resilient and gave two examples. Charlene Shurtz from Cedar Rapids lost everything in the floods. She had six feet of water in her home, making it a total loss. However, she is one of 3,000 Iowans eligible for a home buyout, meaning she will soon be in her new home.

Cyndi Ecker, a small business owner from Waverly, had her life changed when the floods of 2008 destroyed her floral business. She is now back in business, one of more than a thousand small business owners who benefited from the Jumpstart Iowa business program.

Finish What We Started

The Governor called on legislators to finish the work, overcome the devastation from the floods and tornadoes, and rebuild a better, stronger, more sustainable Iowa.