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BROWNELL: FEDERAL, STATE DELAY ON FLOOD RELIEF NOT THE "CHANGE" THAT VOTERS EXPECTED

As House Speaker Nancy Pelosi visits Iowa three months after floods devastated the state, Polk County Supervisor Bob Brownell said today federal and state officials have exhibited a "spectacular level of incompetence and indifference."

Pelosi's staff has described the visit as non-political but it features only congressional Democrats seeking re-election.

Noting that local residents have suffered immensely and local governments face significant infrastructure needs because of the flood, Brownell said in July that Congress and the Senate should have stayed in session "until they approve the kind of federal aid we need here in Polk County and the rest of Iowa."

Brownell said congressional leaders, personified by Pelosi and Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, have responded to the flooding and the personal anguish of Iowa families and businesses in a curious way.

"Their most notable achievement, to date, has been to go on vacation and attend cocktail parties rather than discuss and approve help for Iowans stricken by the floods of 2008. While our congressional delegation, in a bipartisan way, has objected to this 'approach' to relief, the leadership seems to think the hard-working members of Congress needed more time off just when Iowans needed them most," Brownell said.

Brownell said the only relief for local citizens to date has come from neighbors, Polk County, the city of Des Moines and associated non-profits like the Neighborhood Finance Corporation and the Polk County Housing Trust Fund.

"So far, REO Speedwagon and a local casino (which sponsored a relief concert) have proven to be a more effective agency for flood relief than the U.S. Congress or the Iowa Legislature combined," he said. "The bad news is that the entities with the resources to help our stricken brothers and sisters across Iowa are the federal government and the State of Iowa. Both have exhibited, so far, a spectacular level of incompetence and indifference. Their bureaucracies are too ponderous and too thick to have done anyone any good, at least up to this point."

He continued, "The responsibility lies at the doorstep of the Governor's office, the legislative leadership and congressional leadership. In their zeal to blame all things evil on various Republicans, they've taken their eye off the ball and let our fellow lowans "twist in the wind." There are literally families still living in campers outside their homes...three months after the natural disaster. Maybe it's just me, but this seems a little outrageous. This is the "change" we've been waiting for? "

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Paid for by Brownell for Supervisor