



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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TEAM MARYLAND URGES FEMA TO REIMBURSE STATE FOR INAUGURATION COSTS

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Chair of the Maryland delegation Senator Barbara A. Mikulski (D-Md.) today joined her Team Maryland colleagues Senator Benjamin L. Cardin (D-Md.), Congressmen Steny H. Hoyer (D-Md.), Roscoe Bartlett (R-Md.), Elijah E. Cummings (D-Md.), C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger (D-Md.), Chris Van Hollen (D-Md.), John Sarbanes (D-Md.), Congresswoman Donna F. Edwards (D-Md.) and Congressman Frank Kratovil (D-Md.) in urging President Bush to consider the disaster declaration request made by Maryland Governor Martin O’Malley to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to reimburse Maryland for Inauguration costs.

The State will provide critical public safety measures along the President-elect and his family’s transportation route through Maryland to Washington, D.C. and will work with the Secret Service to reinforce security in the District of Columbia. These measures are estimated to cost more than \$12 million. Currently, no funds have been set aside by the U.S. Congress to reimburse the state for these costs. Reimbursement is particularly critical during these difficult economic times when state resources are scarce.

“This is an historic moment in our nation’s history. And our State is proud to provide the support services necessary to make this a smooth and memorable Inauguration. Just as in other parts of the nation, though, the economic downturn means Maryland has fewer resources and greater needs. I hope FEMA will move quickly to approve the State’s request for reimbursement,” Senator Mikulski said.

“I strongly support Maryland’s request for a declaration of emergency for the dates surrounding the Inauguration of Barack Obama,” said Senator Cardin. “Maryland’s close proximity to the Nation’s Capital and the use of our State’s services and resources deserve reimbursement for this extraordinary national event.”

“Maryland is excited to be part of the festivities surrounding the historic Presidential Inauguration and will dedicate significant resources to help ensure the region is prepared to welcome the millions of expected visitors over this weekend,” stated Congressman Steny Hoyer. “With the increased reliance on law enforcement, infrastructure, and public transportation systems, it is crucial that Maryland receive federal assistance in order to ensure the safety and welfare of our constituents and visitors.”

“Maryland should be reimbursed by the federal government for the Inaugural-related security expenses because the inauguration of our President is a national event that brings people from all over the country to the National Capital Region,” said Congressman Bartlett.

“The State of Maryland is proud to provide support services for the inauguration of our next President. However, the burden of these added costs will greatly strain limited resources. I trust that the Federal government will reimburse the State and local governments that provide critical resources during this important Federal event,” said Congressman Chris Van Hollen.

“As friends, families, and neighbors gather to celebrate this historic event, the government has a responsibility to provide whatever protection necessary to ensure that this weekend remains one filled with happiness and hope. The State of Maryland will be providing critical services to keep its residents safe and secure, and it is essential that the federal government provide assistance to cover the associated costs,” said Congressman Elijah Cummings.

“It is an honor that Maryland is involved in such a historic event, the 56th Presidential Inauguration. We are proud to be able to have our law enforcement agencies assist in making this national event a safe success, but this comes at a financial cost to Maryland taxpayers. Maryland is facing severe budget shortfalls. It is only fair the federal government reimburse Maryland for these extra services like they have for other jurisdictions,” said Congressman C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger.

“The State of Maryland is working very hard to ensure that visitors to the historic Inauguration of President-Elect Barack Obama feel welcome,” said Congressman John Sarbanes. “I am hopeful that the President will recognize that these efforts also involve extraordinary expenses and will approve a declaration to grant Maryland some relief.”

“As we prepare to celebrate this historic inauguration, Maryland has answered the call to provide critical services to help protect the millions of Americans who plan to attend,” said Congresswoman Donna F. Edwards. “With the estimated cost of \$12.6 million, coupled with Maryland’s already severe budget deficit, I join my colleagues in the Maryland delegation in requesting the expedited declaration of an emergency to receive supplementary Federal assistance.”

“It’s an honor for Maryland to contribute to next week’s events, but we shouldn’t incur any further financial hardship as a result. Our state and local governments are already

experiencing budget shortfalls and should not be subject to any further costs or more importantly be left without the ability to protect and serve our citizens in the normal course of their duties,” said Congressman Frank Kratovil.

The text of the letter is below:

Dear Mr. President:

We are writing to express our shared support for the State of Maryland’s request for the expedited declaration of an emergency in light of the 56th Presidential Inauguration. An estimated four million people are expected to be in DC to share in this historic event. We respectfully request that you approve the provision of supplementary Federal assistance. The Department of Homeland Security designated the period of January 17, 2009 through January 21, 2009 as a National Special Security Event (NSSE). As a result, state and local officials will work closely with the Secret Service to prepare for the event. Maryland has agreed to supply important services to ensure lives and property are protected during the Inauguration. MEMA assigned three EMS strike teams to the District of Columbia. The Maryland State Police will send sworn officers into DC, the Baltimore City NSSE and along the AMTRAK rail line. There will be increased patrols in the DC metropolitan area including covert assigned troopers. In addition to the State Police, five other State agencies are working with MEMA. For example, MDOT identified supplementary transport including rail and buses and the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene prepared a Hazardous Vulnerability Assessment to anticipate natural events such as cold weather and flu as well as possible terrorist attacks such as bio-terrorism and improvised explosive devices.

Despite Maryland’s extraordinary contributions to the event, there is no funding provided to reimburse state and local governments. Governor O’Malley has estimated the cost of Inauguration security at \$12.6 million. An expedited declaration of a disaster is necessary to help provide the security needed to protect lives and property.

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