

**For Immediate Release**

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## **Governor Musgrove Meets with FEMA in Columbus, Disaster Assistance Request Approved**

(Jackson, MS) – Governor Ronnie Musgrove was in Columbus for the fourth day in a row today, touring affected areas with MEMA Director Robert Latham and FEMA Director Joe Allbaugh. Musgrove hand-delivered the state's request for disaster assistance to Allbaugh, who called President George Bush to recommend approval of the request. Bush immediately granted the approval over the phone.

“With this approval, the people of Columbus and Lowndes County are going to be able to begin the process of rebuilding their homes and communities,” Musgrove said. “I appreciate the quick action of FEMA and President Bush on the disaster declaration.”

The Presidential Declaration of Disaster was granted under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, as a result of the devastating storms that hit the area on the evening of Sunday, November 10.

Preliminary damage estimates are expected to exceed \$2 million for Individual Assistance, and \$21 million for Public Assistance in Lowndes County.

“MEMA is committed to helping the people of Lowndes County rebuild their lives and their homes,” said Latham. “Citizens can begin applying for disaster assistance by calling FEMA at 1-800-621-FEMA (3362).”

On Tuesday, November 12, Musgrove expanded the call of the special legislative session to issue up to \$10 million in general obligation bonds for deposit to the Disaster Assistance Trust Fund, in support of the immediate clean-up needs. The bill has passed both houses and will be signed by Musgrove.

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