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United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 21, 2010

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Mr. Secretary:

In light of the recent tornadoes in Northwest Ohio, I write to you today asking for your continued support and long-term commitment to rebuilding essential community facilities and providing necessary housing assistance in the affected area. As the communities work to restore and rebuild their homes, schools and businesses, your efforts and assistance are vital to their success.

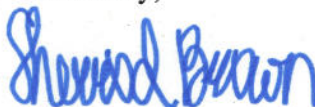
On June 5, Wood, Fulton, Lucas and Ottawa counties reported that a tornado had touched down. Damage estimates are still being formulated, but more than one hundred homes have been destroyed, lives lost, and streets still remain riddled with debris. I was able to visit the area soon after with Tony Logan, the State Director for USDA Rural Development, to survey the damage and meet with local officials, first responders, representatives from the Ohio Emergency Management Agency and the Ohio School Facilities Commission. We saw firsthand the devastation of the local police station, high school, and numerous homes.

As a result of this unexpected tragedy, community residents, businesses, and non-profit organizations have banded together to provide unwavering support to those in need. Cities and counties throughout the state have donated time and resources in the spirit of helping fellow Ohioans.

To fully recover, Northwest Ohio requires USDA's Rural Development team to make a commitment to assisting the region's revitalization through the next several years. The rebuilding of the communities' essential facilities, which is essential to the long-term wellbeing of local residents, requires a sustained commitment from USDA.

I look forward to our continued work in this area.

Sincerely,



Sherrod Brown
United States Senator