



EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS
HONOLULU

NEWS RELEASE

LINDA LINGLE
GOVERNOR

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**PRESIDENT BUSH SIGNS MAJOR DISASTER DECLARATION FOR
HAWAII REQUESTED BY GOVERNOR LINGLE**

HONOLULU – Governor Linda Lingle announced that President George W. Bush has declared a major disaster for the State of Hawai'i as a result of damage due to a 6.7 earthquake that struck the entire state on Sunday, Oct. 15. The President's declaration authorizes federal relief and recovery assistance in all four counties.

According to the President's letter to the Governor, the federal government will provide assistance for debris removal and certain emergency protective measures, including direct federal assistance under the Public Assistance program, and hazard mitigation. The Department of Homeland Security, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) will coordinate assistance efforts and designate specific areas eligible for such assistance.

"We appreciate the prompt response by President Bush to declare a major disaster for the state," said Governor Lingle. "This declaration will make available additional assistance to help the state, counties and residents with cleanup efforts and will further expedite our ability to return to normal. From the moment the earthquake struck, FEMA has been an invaluable partner in assessing the impact and moving us toward a full recovery."

Governor Lingle sent the request for a disaster declaration to the President through FEMA on Sunday, shortly after she issued a proclamation to declare a disaster for the state. The White House received the request from FEMA late Monday night and notified the Governor of the President's approval this morning.

Assessment teams made up of representatives from state departments and Civil Defense, the Hawai'i County Civil Defense Agency, and FEMA are continuing the process of assessing property damage. The teams will continue their efforts this week before making a preliminary cost estimate.

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