

December 13, 2004

Via Email

The Honorable Paul Sarbanes
Suite 309
Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Re: Meeting Points

Dear Senator Sarbanes:

Thank you for allowing us to meet with you and Steve Kanstoroom yesterday in your Capitol Hill office.

We appreciate your willingness to help us with our two claims especially since we both remain homeless. However, we believe it is vital for a renewed effort to be made on behalf of all of the victims, not just the several fortunate enough to meet with you.

Several things seemed clear from our meeting.

First, the claims review was conflicted – it was carried out by many of the same adjusters and adjusting firms that handled the initial claims. Additionally, we felt betrayed when we learned the Task Force supervisor was the former business partner of the NFIP claims supervisor.

Second, many victims did not receive a notice of the claims review nor reasons they would be entitled to additional insurance proceeds. We are not aware of any press release issued by your office, the Maryland Insurance Commissioner or Senator Mikulski's office. We are pleased you recognize the contribution Steve's findings and advocacy have made on behalf of the victims, especially in light of stalled governmental efforts.

As victims living the nightmare for fifteen months, it is futile to attempt another review from the very people that mistreated us in the first place. We firmly believe the only chance we have to receive a fair settlement is for someone to take a leadership role and speak out on our behalf. We are hoping that someone is you.

We believe it can only help if you were to speak out on our behalf as to our plight to the media and your colleagues. As we discussed in our meeting yesterday, Steve Kanstoroom has agreed he would make the effort to sit with your colleagues of recently flooded states, make them aware of the issues and attempt to gain additional support. Such meetings could occur much more quickly if you made an effort to contact your colleagues on behalf of all Maryland victims. As you know, attempting to meet with Members of Congress without someone to pave the way is a very difficult, slow and

inefficient process. For many reasons, including the extreme hardships we and other victims are enduring, we are urging you speak out for us now, before the Holidays.

We also agree it would be helpful to have the contact information for the victims so they may be made aware of the review and its true parameters. Any assistance you would be willing to provide would be greatly appreciated.

Lastly, we believe it would help all of the victims if it was widely known federal agents were attempting to cover up issues that have led to our predicament. We appreciate you referred the matter to the President's Council on Integrity and Efficiency (PCIE) several months ago. Likewise, we would appreciate your reconsidering your position to release the document you sent to the PCIE. As we now understand, it concerns alleged wrongdoing on the part of the Inspector General's office to dissuade Steve Kanstoroom from bringing issues to the Senate's attention.

Thank you for considering our modest requests.

Sincerely,

 

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cc: Senator Barbara Mikulski
Isabel Victims Group