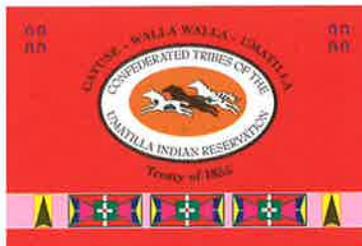


**Confederated Tribes of the  
Umatilla Indian Reservation**

Board of Trustees & General Council



46411 Timine Way • Pendleton, OR 97801  
(541) 429-7030 • fax (541) 276-3095  
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**VIA FACSIMILE AND ELECTRONIC MAIL**

July 26, 2012

The Honorable Joseph Lieberman, Chairman  
Committee on Homeland Security  
and Governmental Affairs  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Susan Collins, Ranking Member  
Committee on Homeland Security  
and Governmental Affairs  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Re: Support for S. 2283, a bill to Amend the Stafford Act

Dear Chairman Lieberman and Ranking Member Collins:

On behalf of the Board of the Trustees of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR), I am writing to convey our support of S. 2283 as introduced in the Senate and urge your committee to hold a hearing on the bill. S. 2283 would amend the Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to authorize Indian tribes to directly request the President for a major disaster or emergency declaration. We understand that H.R. 2903, the FEMA Reauthorization Act of 2011, passed out of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure in March and contains a corresponding provision in Section 210 which we also support.

Currently, only Governors can request a major disaster or emergency declaration to receive Federal disaster assistance. Under current statute, Tribes are classified as "local governments." This status deprives Indian tribal governments of the right to request emergency or major disaster declarations directly from the President and is inconsistent with our legal and political relationship with the Federal government.

S. 2283 would appropriately recognize tribal interests in protecting their respective homelands. In our case, the CTUIR holds the utmost interest in emergency response and security of our Reservation, our residents, and critical tribal infrastructure and enterprises. We maintain our own emergency management infrastructure and coordinate responses to emergencies and major disasters with outside entities as an incident requires.

We are pleased the Administration has conveyed their support for this legislation and their commitment to our government-to-government relationships as established by law. This

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CTUIR Support for S. 2283  
July 26, 2012

important legislation will increase preparedness and response in tribal communities nationwide and we urge you favorable consideration of the bill. If you or your staff would like more information, please contact Lisa Ganuelas, CTUIR Legislative Coordinator, at (541) 429-7392 or by e-mail, [lisaganuelas@ctuir.org](mailto:lisaganuelas@ctuir.org).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Les Minthorn". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Les Minthorn, Chairman  
Board of Trustees