

*Randall Vicente, Governor*  
*Harold Vicente, 1st Lt. Governor*  
*Barney Vallo, 2nd Lt. Governor*  
*Daniel J. Lucario, Tribal Secretary*  
*Robert Antonio, Tribal Interpreter*



*25 Pinsbaari Drive*  
*P. O. Box 309*  
*Acoma, NM 87034*  
*Telephone: (505)552-6604*  
*Fax: (505)552-7204*

**PUEBLO OF ACOMA**  
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

July 17, 2012

The Honorable Joseph Lieberman  
Chairperson  
Senate Committee on Homeland Security  
&  
Governmental Affairs  
340 Dirksen, Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Susan Collins  
Ranking Member  
Senate Committee on Homeland Security  
&  
Governmental Affairs  
340 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington DC 20510

Dear Chairperson Lieberman and Ranking Member Collins:

The Pueblo of Acoma is hereby writing in support of S.2283 as introduced in the U.S. Senate.

The purpose of amending the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act is to authorize federally recognized Tribal Nations the ability to directly request from the President a major disaster or emergency declaration. This has been a priority for Indian country for over a decade and upon enactment of the disaster or emergency declaration, will treat Indian tribes as sovereign governments that they are.

The Pueblo of Acoma hereby strongly supports S.2283 as introduced. Currently federally recognized Indian tribes experiencing a disaster or emergency incident must rely upon a State Governor to formally make a request to the President for a declaration. Amendment of the act would allow equal access for federally recognized tribal governments, in the same manner as States, in requesting disaster assistance. This would increase capacity of tribal governments to prepare, mitigate, respond, and recover more effectively to disasters in their own communities.

Tribes are sovereign nations; they are vastly distinct in their history, culture, identity, governmental structure, and community priorities. Each Tribal nation makes independent decisions which are best for their communities. Under this legislation, strongly supported by the Pueblo of Acoma, federally recognized tribes have a choice. Tribes may still request the State to make a declaration on their behalf but this provides another avenue for those who want to exercise their sovereign rights.

The Pueblo of Acoma appreciates your attention to S.2283, legislation that will increase capacity to prepare, mitigate, respond and recover from emergencies or disasters but will ultimately save lives and protect property. The Pueblo of Acoma supports your positive action in this manner.

Sincerely,

**PUEBLO OF ACOMA**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Randall Vicente". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "R" and a distinct "V".

Randall Vicente  
Governor