SEP 29 2009

His Worship Fred Eisenberger
Mayor of the City of Hamilton
Suite 230
77 James Street North
Hamilton, Ontario L8R 2K3

Dear Mayor Eisenberger:

The Office of the Prime Minister has forwarded me your correspondence of July 30, 2009, regarding the damage caused by the heavy rainfall on July 26, 2009, in Hamilton.

Public Safety Canada administers the Disaster Financial Assistance Arrangements on behalf of the Government of Canada. The Disaster Financial Assistance Arrangements are intended to assist provinces and territories with response and recovery costs that exceed what they might reasonably be expected to bear on their own. The Disaster Financial Assistance Arrangements Guidelines are applied consistently to all events across Canada to ensure fair and equitable federal financial support following natural disasters.

It is important to note that the Disaster Financial Assistance Arrangements do not provide financial assistance to those directly affected by the disaster, but rather cost share eligible provincial expenditures once the expenditures exceed the provincial per capita threshold, which in the case of Ontario is approximately $12.9 million based on the provincial population. Once the threshold is exceeded and the province requests federal financial assistance, the federal share of eligible expenses can approach 90%, depending on how much the province spends on its response and recovery efforts.

Each province and territory establishes its own financial assistance program and is responsible for the provision and administration of assistance to affected individuals, small businesses, farms and local governments. All decisions regarding financial assistance to those affected by a natural disaster are taken solely by the Province and the Disaster Financial Assistance Arrangements place no restrictions on the provincial program.
I appreciate your concern regarding the provision of assistance to residents affected by the heavy rainfall. Please be assured that the Government of Canada will be ready to respond should the Province of Ontario request federal financial assistance under the Disaster Financial Assistance Arrangements.

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]

The Honourable Peter Van Loan, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Public Safety