

U.S. Rep. Kind: After weekend storms, Rep. Ron Kind helps introduce bipartisan Disaster Prevention Bill

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Washington, DC— Following yet another round of extreme weather causing flooding and leaving thousands of Wisconsinites without power for days, Rep. Ron Kind helped introduce the bipartisan Resilience Revolving Loan Fund Act with Reps. Angie Craig (D-MN) and Rodney Davis (R-IL) to help reduce the risks and costs of natural disasters. This landmark bill would create a low-interest loan program for Wisconsin and other states to fund mitigation projects that reduce the risks and costs of natural disasters. Loans would be available for projects that minimize the risk of flooding, wildfires, storm surges, chemical spills, and other events deemed catastrophic by FEMA.

“The damage caused by flooding year after year takes a toll on Wisconsin families, businesses, and communities. We need to be giving folks the tools they need to be properly prepared for future disasters,” said Rep. Ron Kind. “The Resilience Revolving Loan Fund Act will help cities and towns in Wisconsin invest in projects to reduce damage and minimize risks of future floods and other natural disasters.”

Currently, only one FEMA program provides communities with resources to implement proactive efforts to prevent future damage and that program is restrictive in its eligible activities. The new revolving loan fund would allow states to bring low-interest loans to counties and cities for disaster mitigation projects of varying types that creates the flexibility local governments need to respond to mounting disaster impacts. Repayment of the loans would fund subsequent projects. The legislation is modeled, in part, after the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) program, a successful federal-state partnership to help ensure safe drinking water in the United States.

The 2019 January-May period was the wettest on record for the U.S., causing communities along the Mississippi River to incur severe costs in damages. The flooding damaged homes, temporarily displaced families, and delayed farmers' planting season.