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Governor Strickland Declares State of Emergency

Columbus, Ohio – Governor Ted Strickland today issued a state declaration of emergency, allowing the State greater flexibility in quickly allocating resources from state entities, such as the Ohio National Guard and the Ohio Department of Transportation, out to local communities.

The declaration follows a major wind storm Sunday that resulted in the loss of five lives and led to widespread power outages and damage across the state.

"The state of Ohio has experienced hurricane-level gusts of wind, which is obviously extremely unusual for our state," Strickland said. "We are staying in very close contact with our communities and doing everything in our power to assist the response and recovery to these extraordinary circumstances. Ohioans are strong and resilient, and I know that our citizens' first concern will be looking out for each other. And I will make sure that the State of Ohio stands with its people during this difficult time."

The Ohio Department of Public Safety is coordinating the response on the statewide level through the Ohio Emergency Management Agency. As of 11:55 a.m., there were 1.92 million customers without power across the state. The state declaration of emergency will allow Ohio greater flexibility of allocating resources to, among other things, help with local roads in need of clearing and to assist utilities in moving crews from around the state and nation to where they need to be to help get power restored as quickly as possible.

Other assessment updates include: 84 counties have reported damages or outages; an estimated 450 school districts are closed across the state; 11 counties have issued county level emergency declarations (Butler, Clark, Delaware, Greene, Hamilton, Knox, Licking, Madison, Montgomery, Morrow, Seneca; ODOT reports 46 roads are closed or restricted and one-third of the traffic signals on the state system are not functioning; county government offices are fully (Butler, Preble, Highland, Delaware) or partially (Clark) closed in five counties; numerous businesses and universities are closed or delayed.

Strickland urged Ohioans to remember that debris and power outages are causing hazards around the state, particularly in central and southwest Ohio. In particular, downed power lines are exceedingly dangerous.

"In this difficult time, I am asking Ohioans to pull together, look out for each other, check on their neighbors and share resources," Strickland said. "I have great confidence that the people of our state will work together to help us get through this difficult time."

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Summary: Exhibit Declaration of Emergency inadvertently omitted from Application for Waiver electronically filed by Mr. Douglas E. Hart on behalf of CINCINNATI BELL TELEPHONE COMPANY