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**FROM THE OFFICE OF THE ALABAMA EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY**

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**Governor Bentley Requests Public Assistance for 39 Counties Impacted by December Storms**

**MONTGOMERY-** At the request of Governor Robert Bentley, the Alabama Emergency Management Agency on Wednesday announced the state has formally requested federal disaster assistance through the Federal Emergency Management Agency. The approval of this request will authorize the FEMA Public Assistance Grant Program to aid jurisdictions in Autauga, Barbour, Blount, Bullock, Butler, Chambers, Cherokee, Clay, Cleburne, Coffee, Colbert, Conecuh, Covington, Crenshaw, Cullman, Dale, DeKalb, Elmore, Escambia, Fayette, Franklin, Geneva, Henry, Houston, Jackson, Lamar, Lawrence, Lee, Lowndes, Macon, Marion, Marshall, Monroe, Pike, Perry, Russell, St Clair, Walker, and Winston Counties as they recover from the effects of severe weather that occurred during December 24 through 31, 2015.

“The damage caused by the tornadoes and flooding significantly impacted Alabama communities,” Governor Robert Bentley said. “We are working to rebuild from historic flooding, and the FEMA Public Assistance will be a tremendous help to communities. I appreciate the quick work by damage assessment teams in order for Alabama to make the request to FEMA. Together with our federal partners, we will recover from the damage.”

The request follows recently-concluded damage assessments performed by local, state and federal personnel. Assessments have indicated that governments at all levels have collectively incurred millions of dollars in combined costs for expenses such as debris removal and damage to infrastructure. The Public Assistance Grant Program provides assistance for debris removal, emergency protective measures, and the repair, replacement or restoration of disaster-damaged, publicly owned facilities and infrastructure.

“I am very thankful for the joint effort of local governments and FEMA to assist Alabama EMA in conducting damage assessments statewide over the last week. Now that we have compiled the data and Governor Bentley has made the request, we are very hopeful for a quick response.” said Alabama EMA Director Art Faulkner. Approval of this request is very important to repair the major damage to our public infrastructure throughout the state.”