

Floor Statement of Rep. Paul Tonko
Safe Climate Caucus
November 18, 2013

Thank you Mr. Speaker.

In the past week, we have seen yet another devastating storm claim the lives and communities of thousands of people in the Philippines, as well as a string of tornadoes cut through twelve states, from New York to Tennessee.

These powerful storms last for a matter of days, while recovery from their disruption takes years. Hurricane Irene began as a tropical storm on August 20th, 2011. By the time it completed its path on August 29th, it had wreaked havoc from Puerto Rico to New England, becoming the 7th most costly hurricane in our nation's history, while taking 56 lives.

The storm lasted a mere ten days, no more than thirty-six hours in any one spot.

But in my district, and other affected areas, people are still recovering, more than two years later. Infrastructure still needs to be repaired, or replaced or improved upon. Businesses have not fully recovered and many families are still struggling to rebuild their homes, and their lives. The costs continue to mount.

We have denied our responsibility to deal with climate change for far too long. The time to act is now.

With that Mr. Speaker, I yield back.