

Floor Statement of Rep. Paul Tonko
Safe Climate Caucus
June 4, 2013

Mr. Speaker,

As Hurricane season begins this week, there is no better time for Congress to re-focus its efforts on better protecting our coast line communities and the more than 123 million people that live in them from extreme weather events.

In the wake of hurricanes like Katrina, Rita and Sandy, and Irene which took lives and destroyed property in my district, extreme weather preparedness should be an issue that both Democrats and Republicans support now more than ever.

Since 2011, extreme weather episodes have cost \$188 billion in property destruction, business closures, and crop damages. Even worse, these storms have taken the lives of 1,107 Americans.

There is ample evidence to believe that this trend of increased extreme weather, which has grown exponentially since 2000, will only continue to get worse.

Just today, we heard about the widest tornado recorded in United States history, at 2.6 miles wide and winds of 296 miles per hour.

We need to ask ourselves: do we address the climate change problem now, or do we continue to ignore future threats, making preventable disasters more and more costly with each passing year of inaction?

As co-chair of the Sustainable Energy and Environment Coalition in the House of Representatives, I suggest we act now.

Thank you Mr. Speaker, and with that, I yield back.