Ford Porter, spokesperson for the Office of Governor Cooper, shared the following statement on a legislative hearing on the administration's respopnse to Hurricane Matthew: “This sham hearing was an embarrassing use of the legislature's time.

Republican politicians decided that the way to help Matthew survivors is to create another bureaucratic committee while the Governor and his administration are focused on actually helping hurricane victims. More than $743 million has been spent on Matthew recovery already, and we are focused on getting more resources out to the people who are still in need. It's unfortunate that Republicans prefer political theater over working with Emergency Management to help people.

Republican legislators raided a fund meant to help bring jobs to eastern North Carolina and it seems as though now, just a few weeks before the election, many of them are panicked about that poor decision and how it could cost them votes in November.”

Hurricane Matthew Recovery Background

In 2016, the legislature moved the disbursement of CDBG-DR funding to the North Carolina Emergency Management Agency. Mike Sprayberry, Director of NCEM, has testified at least 6 times before the legislature, including two weeks ago before the Select Committee on Disaster Relief. He is scheduled to testify again before the JPS oversight committee two weeks from now on September 13.

At the hearing two weeks ago, Republican House member Pat McElraft had this to say, “But, to see where you started, where other administrations had not, had not really planned for the future, and for this kind of CDBG-DR and the new regulations there. Having to build this whole program, I admire you and your group.”

According to NCEM, CDBG-DR funds represent 15% of the total recovery funds available.

More than $743 million in federal, state and local funding has gone to the ground in the aftermath of Hurricane Matthew.

ACP Background

Earlier this year, the legislature raided a $58 million fund that was intended to help with

economic development in the pipeline counties.

A WRAL story clearly indicates that eastern North Carolina business and farming leaders had concerns about being able to access the pipeline for economic development and farming use.

The ACP permit decision was made by experts at DEQ after a rigorous review process. It was completely separate and independent from the agreement on the rural jobs fund.

In a press conference on February 14, 2018, after having raided the economic development fund, Senator Phil Berger pledged that the legislature would look at public funding for economic development gas line extensions in the pipeline counties, but the committee did not indicate that any work has happened on that.

After raiding the fund, the legislature has done nothing to acquire the funds that they have promised to school districts. The following amounts have been promised to school districts that have not yet received them:

Cumberland – $15,115,607

Halifax – $1,920,839

Roanoke Rapids – $2,157,148

Weldon City – $642,996

Johnston – $11,998,658

Nash – $7,547,838

Northampton – $3,574,629

Robeson – $7,544,754

Sampson – $2,416,321

Clinton City – $875,403

Wilson – $4,005,807