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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **State Receives Disaster Declaration from Small Business Administration for Stephenson County**

*Low interest, long-term loans available to qualifying homeowners, businesses impacted by March 2019 flooding*

*Disaster Loan Outreach Center will open to the public on Friday, May 10 at Highland Community College*

SPRINGFIELD – Governor JB Pritzker today announced the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) approved the state’s request for assistance to help people and businesses in northern Illinois recover from devastating flooding. The declaration stems from March 2019 flooding along the Rock and Pecatonica rivers. The approved SBA disaster declaration makes low-interest loans available to homeowners, renters and businesses in Stephenson County, as well as the contiguous counties of Winnebago, Jo Daviess, Carroll and Ogle in Illinois and (2) counties in Wisconsin.

SBA loans can help repair or replace damaged or destroyed real estate. Homeowners and renters can apply for loans to repair or replace damaged or destroyed personal property. Businesses and private non-profit organizations can apply for loans to repair or replace damaged or destroyed real estate, machinery and equipment, inventory and other business assets.

“As we continue to watch rivers and streams fluctuate, finding available resources for communities and their residents has become a necessity,” said Acting Director Alicia Tate-Nadeau. “As we look at the flood outlook for our state, we know that the road to recovery will be a long and difficult path, but the State of Illinois stands ready to help as flood victims begin to rebuild.”

A recent damage assessment survey in Stephenson County found 19 homes and eight business sustained major damage and had significant uninsured losses. In all, that survey estimate shows more than \$1 million dollars in residential and commercial losses in Stephenson County related to the March 2019 flood.

The filing deadline to return applications for physical property damage is July 8, 2019. The deadline to return economic injury applications is February 7, 2020. Any individual or business needing additional information, or wishing to apply for a loan, should contact the SBA Customer Service Center at (800) 659-2955.

A Disaster Loan Outreach Center (DLOC) will be set up to provide additional information and loan assistance at Highland Community College, located at 2998 W Pearl City Rd, Freeport, IL. SBA representatives will be set up in the Student Conference Center, Room H-209. The public is recommended to park in Lot A (East) or Lot A (West). The facility will open on Friday, May 10.

The State Emergency Operations Center in Springfield remains activated in support of the flood response and recovery efforts throughout Illinois. To date, more than one million sandbags have been pre-positioned along rivers, levees and critical infrastructure to protect Illinois communities.