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### Flood Funding Turns Partisan

Monday, 09/26/11 5:50pm

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Bob Kinzel

(Host) Vermont Republican leaders are urging on Governor Peter Shumlin to call a special legislative session to deal with the recovery issues associated with tropical storm Irene. They also want him to pledge not to raise any taxes to help rebuild Vermont.

As VPR's Bob Kinzel reports, some political observers think the GOP statement is a signal that the bi-partisan nature of the recovery effort is coming to an end.

(Kinzel) In the month since tropical storm Irene hit Vermont there's been truce among the state's political parties to focus on relief and recovery efforts but that could be changing.

Pat McDonald is the chairwoman of the Vermont Republican Party. She's calling on the Governor to propose a comprehensive recovery plan to a special session of the Legislature next month.

She also wants him to pledge not to increase any taxes for recovery programs and to begin to implement Republican plans to reform education financing in the state.

(McDonald) "We've got to make some really tough decisions going forward to get people back on their feet to get businesses open and people back to work."

(Kinzel) Legislation allocating more money for FEMA is being held up in Washington because House Republican leaders are insisting that these extra funds be financed by making additional budget cuts. McDonald says Vermonters definitely deserve the assistance but she also thinks the GOP leaders are raising a valid point.

(McDonald) "I also think there are legitimate discussions to be had about 'where does this money come from?'"

(Kinzel) Shumlin says it's premature to hold a special session because the costs are still being tallied. He also says Vermont has made great progress in its recovery effort because these programs have been non partisan.

(Shumlin) "That's been the spirit of our recovery and I do think that the criticisms from the leadership of the Republican Party are out of spirit with that spirit."

(Kinzel) And Shumlin says the GOP decision in Washington to hold up the FEMA funds is unfair.

(Shumlin) "Suddenly it's off limits. We have to find offsets, we have to gore other people's oxes to take care of Vermont and the American people when they're down on their knees. They've got it totally backwards in Washington. I just don't get it."

(Kinzel) Retired Middelbury College political science professor Eric Davis thinks Vermont Republicans could be hurting themselves with this new approach.

(Davis) "If the Vermont Republican Party's leadership is seen in any way as supportive of what the House Republicans are doing in Washington, that could be very damaging for the Republican Party brand in Vermont in the next cycle."

(Kinzel) Democratic Legislative leaders also agree with the governor that it's a mistake to hold a special session until the state's overall recovery needs become clearer.

For VPR News, I'm Bob Kinzel in Montpelier.

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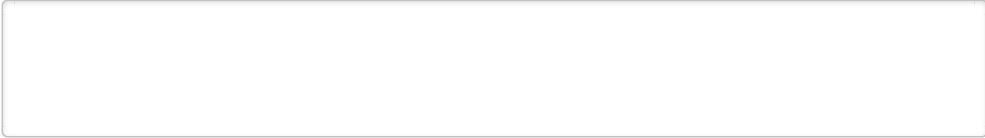
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VPR News

AARP Launches Campaign For Ratepayer Refund

Wednesday, 01/18/12 7:37am

A consumer organization representing older Vermonters is launching a media campaign that demands a refund for ratepayers if the state's largest utility is sold. AARP-Vermont says its goal is to win back money it says consumers are owed for bailing out the utility a decade ago.

Northfield Reinstates Permit Fees

Wednesday, 01/18/12 7:04am

Bellevue Sentenced To 3 1/2 Years For Embezzlement

Wednesday, 01/18/12 6:06am

Wind Brings Scattered Power Outages

Wednesday, 01/18/12 6:06am

NPR News

Virtual Victuals: A Gamer Turns Video Game Food Into Real Food

Wednesday, 01/18/12 11:06am

Mushrooms and cherries first taught gamers what food can do in games. Now, one gamer has taken the food from the virtual world and put it on the dinner plate.

Federal Authorities Charge 7 In Insider Trading Case

Wednesday, 01/18/12 10:11am

In Snow-Wearry Alaskan Towns, Sun And Smiles Emerge

Wednesday, 01/18/12 9:50am

Internet Blackout Puts Washington Online Piracy Fight In Limelight

Wednesday, 01/18/12 9:33am



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