



UNITED STATES SENATE

For Immediate Release

Contact: Courtney Chandler (Blumenthal) 860-256-5274

Laura Maloney (Murphy) 202-228-1056

February 7, 2019

BLUMENTHAL & MURPHY INTRODUCE BILLS TO PROVIDE RELIEF TO HOMEOWNERS AND BUSINESSES WITH CRUMBLING FOUNDATIONS

[WASHINGTON, DC]— U.S. Senators Richard Blumenthal (D-Conn.) and Chris Murphy (D-Conn.) introduced two bills— the Crumbling Foundations Small Business and Homeowners Assistance Act and the Aid to Homeowners with Crumbling Foundations Act—to provide meaningful relief for homeowners and businesses in Connecticut with crumbling foundations. In addition to Blumenthal and Murphy, both bills are cosponsored by U.S. Senators Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.) and Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.).

“These common sense steps will help alleviate the pain of homeowners and businesses across Connecticut repairing and rebuilding crumbling foundations—a continuing financial and emotional nightmare,” said Blumenthal. **“The federal government must step up and provide real relief from the unconscionable stress and expense made worse by the unacceptable inaction of many insurance companies. I will continue the fight to assist these homeowners and businesses in meeting this urgent challenge.”**

“Helping families dealing with crumbling foundations continues to be critically important to me,” said Murphy. **“I’ve visited the homes of Connecticut families with crumbling foundations, and I’ve seen firsthand the stress and financial burden this is causing them. While we’ve been successful in getting Congress to take some action, it’s not enough. I’m proud to partner with Senator Blumenthal in reintroducing these bills to provide federal assistance and some relief to these homeowners.”**

“Thousands of homeowners in Massachusetts and Connecticut are on the hook for costly foundation repairs that they never could have anticipated. The federal government must do what it can to provide assistance, including direct aid, to relieve the unfair financial and emotional stresses the issue is causing in our communities,” said Markey.

“Families and business owners in Western Massachusetts and beyond are facing enormous bills to fix crumbling home and building foundations,” said Warren. **“My Senate colleagues and I are working to pass legislation that will help protect Massachusetts families and small businesses from these unforeseen costs.”**

The Crumbling Foundations Small Business and Homeowners Assistance Act of 2019, led by Blumenthal and co-sponsored by Murphy, Markey, and Warren would establish a grant program through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to award funding up to \$20 million annually over a five year period -- \$100 million over five years. Grants would be available to states to reimburse affected owners of small businesses, condominium associations, and homeowners for work to prevent, repair and mitigate damage caused by concrete foundations containing pyrrhotite.

The Aid to Homeowners with Crumbling Foundations Act, led by Murphy and co-sponsored by Blumenthal, Markey, and Warren would provide \$100 million over five years from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to states like Connecticut that have created non-profit crumbling foundations assistance funds to repair damage to residential structures due pyrrhotite.

Blumenthal and Murphy have also fought jointly to secure tax relief for crumbling foundation-related repairs. The IRS announced last February it would allow Connecticut homeowners with crumbling foundations to take advantage of a federal tax deduction that provides relief on qualified home repairs through December 2020.

Further, Blumenthal and Murphy have also sought legislation to require the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) to establish regulations for acceptable levels of pyrrhotite, and to assist homeowners in detecting, preventing and mitigating damage from the mineral.

###