

U.S. Senator Maria Cantwell
Mount Vernon Flood Wall Briefing and Tour

December 13, 2025

Sen. Cantwell Q&A Responses

[\[VIDEO\]](#)

Reporter 1: Governor, you spoke yesterday about the FEMA declaration response that's coming in. Have you talked with Secretary Noem about what kind of aid Washington will be receiving over the next couple of days, and when they're expected to be on ground?

Sen. Cantwell: I think that the key thing is now, when you're dealing with an emergency, the things that we really want is, we want, with evacuations, to have shelter. We just saw in Snohomish County, the Red Cross and the facility that is setting up there. But when FEMA comes into the picture, those shelters are more supported and have more resources available to them. And that's very important, because this is in many parts of our state.

Secondly, we need their help in clearing these roads. And we have some very big economic drivers to our state. When you think about a border crossing at Sumas, and you think about Highway 2 and its economic impact, Highway 12, we will need their help in trying to stabilize those situations.

And then, if we are going to see future evacuations -- I want to thank the National Guard, they've done a great job. They've responded well, but they can help in that. And we saw some more, I think, flexibility in how those resources were being deployed, because FEMA is showing up.

Reporter 2: Is there anything in particular with this last weather event that you found this area did really well that you would recommend to other agencies and counties, or moving forward do you think there needs to be any modification?

Sen. Cantwell: I can't tell you, every place that we've been so far, there is almost a kumbaya moment in the notion that everybody worked together, first in the preparation and planning, and then in the execution and cooperation. And so, we're hearing that everywhere.

But I want to shout out, you heard the NOAA forecaster, and I think that that's what we need to communicate to preparedness across the nation. We do see fires, we do see floods, we do see hurricanes, we see tornadoes. But if a community doesn't know what those events and the damage can do, and look at what Senator Murray and the mayor was able to do here at the last 2021 -- whatever, whatever year the flood was, was able to then build the seawall that protects this community.

So I am sure there are other parts of our state that need a similar infrastructure. I'm sure there are other parts of the country, but it starts with that weather forecasting, having the best weather forecasting, having those people translate that days, if not weeks, in advance. And that's the key thing, is to have it weeks in advance, if you can, and then everybody else goes into action.

And I think that's what we've learned here. Give the community the tools, and the community will respond.