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Contact:

CeCe Hipps, President Haywood Chamber of Commerce

828.456.3021

chipps@haywoodchamber.com

Small Business-Haywood Strong Disaster Relief Fund Opening Donations to support businesses affected by Tropical Storm Fred.

Canton, NC – Haywood Strong Disaster Relief Fund is one of the initiatives created by the Haywood Business Support Task Force, a collaboration between the Haywood County Chamber of Commerce (Chamber), The Mountain West Partnership (MWP), WCU and UNCA Small Business Technology Development Center (SBTDC), Mountain Bizworks (MB), and Haywood Community College Small Business Center (HCC-SBC). This group formed soon after the impact of FRED began as a local effort to provide support to the business community, which drives the local economy. In addition to the Relief Fund program, the task force will provide comprehensive information, printed resources, and town hall meetings.

The relief fund is made possible through a partnership with Mountain Bizworks, a 501(c)(3) community development financial institution that serves as a vehicle for a wide range of community development needs.

The program is set up to award qualified businesses with a small grant. There is a task force set up to review applications and initiate awards every two weeks within a 90-day period, or until funds run out. The Task Force will have an ongoing review of the fund to determine if donations will allow for an increase to the allotted amount, and to be able to extend the time period.

“Haywood County is a great place to live and work even during times of crisis. One of the things that makes Haywood County special is that we’re a community that has strong representation in all aspects of business development.” shares Haywood Chamber of Commerce, President CeCe Hipps. Five

organizations came together to implement and to assist in small business recovery after Tropical Storm Fred left many of our businesses in the Canton, Bethel and Cruso area in need of assistance.

The task force is currently making a promotional push to add funds to an already \$60,000 donation by requesting donations earmarked for business recovery. **Donations are currently being accepted.** For information on how to support the program, visit [here](#) or contact **CeCe Higgs, President of Haywood Chamber of Commerce. 828.456.3021 chiggs@haywoodchamber.com**

Applications are now being accepted. [Go to this Link to apply](#) or contact chiggs@haywoodchamber.com or reach out directly to the leadership of the task force organizations.

About the Haywood Business Support Task Force:

The task force was formed in response to the disaster of Tropical Storm Fred with the mission of working together to support the business community as they work through and recover from times of crisis. The task force is made up of Haywood County Chamber of Commerce (Chamber), The Mountain West Partnership (MWP), WCU and Western Carolina University, Small Business Technology Development Center (SBTDC), Mountain Bizworks (MB), and Haywood Community College Small Business Center (HCC-SBC).

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