



International Association of Emergency Managers

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IAEM Legislative Alert

Contact Senators To Request EMPG Funding Increases

To: U.S. Emergency Managers, IAEM
From: Martha Braddock, IAEM Policy Advisor
Subject: **Contact Your Senators To Request Increase in EMPG Funding in DHS Budget**
Date: June 22, 2006

Key Senate Markups on June 27 and June 29:

■ On Tuesday, June 27, the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Homeland Security is scheduled to mark up H.R. 5441, the FY 07 Appropriations for the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

■ On Thursday, June 29, the Full Senate Appropriations Committee is scheduled to mark up H.R. 5441.

Background: The President's request for Fiscal Year 2007 was \$170 million, a decrease from the \$183.1 million appropriated by Congress last year. The House passed a bill that included \$185 million. (\$6 million was added in House Full Committee.)

This is going to be a tough budget year, and it is important that the Senators' offices hear from you again.

Many of you made Senate contacts in March requesting that your Senators sign the letter being circulated by Senators Voinovich, Akaka, Collins and Lieberman, seeking to increase Emergency Management Performance Grants (EMPG) to \$235 million and asking that they include EMPG on their personal priority list. We were pleased that 41 Senators signed the letter. (A copy of that letter is on the IAEM Web site at www.iaem.com/resources/Advocacy/documents/FinalLetter07.pdf.)

Action Requested: Contact your Senators' Washington Offices as soon as possible.

Substance of Contact:

■ You are urging their support for an increase in Emergency Management Performance Grants to \$235 million in the Preparedness Directorate in the Department of Homeland Security FY 07 appropriations that will be marked up next week.

■ Explain briefly what EMPG is and why it is important to your county or city. Tell what EMPG is used for and why we need to be increasing capacity at the state and local levels, not reducing it. Many Members of Congress and staff do not understand what emergency managers do and why the role is vital.

■ A study by the National Emergency Management Association two years ago indicated that there is a \$260 million shortfall. We are seeking an increase to begin addressing this shortfall.

■ If your Senators signed the March letter requesting that EMPG be increased to \$235 million, be certain to thank them and ask for their continuing support. (Names listed at end.)

■ Please ask Senators' offices to advise Chairman Judd Gregg (R-NH) and Ranking Member Robert Byrd (D-WV) of their strong support for increasing EMPG funding.

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■ Some other thoughts on the need for an EMPG funding increase that you may want to include in your e-mail or fax:

- It is clear from the reports following Katrina that we must strengthen the emergency management system – that means strengthening Federal, state and local capabilities. All disasters are local, and we must build a stronger foundation at the state and local levels.
- EMPG is an investment; it is vital for strengthening the state and local capability. It is the only source of direct Federal assistance to state and local governments for emergency management capacity building. EMPG funds support emergency management personnel, all-hazard disaster planning, training and drills, planning for and implementing mass evacuations and sheltering, public information and disaster education, warning systems, and emergency operations centers that provide critical communication and coordination among all response agencies during disaster response.
- EMPG is a matching grant intended to be 50% federal and 50% state and local. It has never been funded at a level that even approaches this objective. At a time when all of us are very concerned about accountability in the use of Federal funds, it's important to note that EMPG is a performance grant requiring deliverables and performance reviews which must be met if the funding is to be continued.
- Your responsibilities have increased with efforts to comply with HSPD 8 on National Preparedness and to implement the National Incident Management System and the National Response Plan.
- The catastrophic events in the Gulf Coast have resulted in additional requirements for plan reviews and revisions addressing mass evacuation and sheltering without additional funding.
- This is a grant that has been in existence since the 1950s, because it was recognized that there is a Federal interest in having strong emergency management system extending to the state and local level. Recent events have, once again, clearly demonstrated the criticality of this concept.
- EMPG has been called the “backbone of the emergency management system” by Congress.
- EMPG helps in providing assistance to other communities and states under mutual aid. The hundreds of missions accomplished under the Emergency Management Assistance Compact during the 2006 hurricane season illustrated the need for having strong emergency management programs that can provide surge capacity to help other states and communities.

Who to Contact:

- All Senators are important to this effort and should be contacted.
- However, contacting staff of Members of the Senate Appropriations Committee and the Appropriations Subcommittee on Homeland Security is especially key. (Names are listed below.)

For Established Contacts:

- If you already have established contacts in a Senator's Washington office, call them, send an e-mail, and follow up if you can with a faxed letter to the Senator marked to the correct staff person's attention.
- Be certain this issue is still one of that staff person's responsibilities. Staff change and responsibilities shift.

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- Even though you provide the information orally, it is helpful for the staff member to have the information in writing.
- If you fax your letter, be sure to follow up with a phone call. Some offices get so many faxes that it takes several days for a fax to get to the correct person.
- Be sure to keep your Senator's state office in the loop.
- If you sent a letter in March, it will just need a little updating.

For New Contacts:

- Call the Washington Office (phone numbers available from www.senate.gov), or you can call the Capitol Operator at 202-225-3121 and ask for the specific Senator's office.
- Identify yourself as the emergency manager from (name of county or city) so they will know you are a constituent.
- Get the name of the correct staff member; do not just leave a message for the Senator.
- Ask which staff person in the office is handling issues related to emergency management and appropriations for the Department of Homeland Security. (Frequently a different person will be handling DHS issues, such as customs or immigration).
- Be clear you are calling regarding an FY 07 appropriations issue pending before the Appropriations Subcommittee on Homeland Security.
- Be certain you get the name of the person you talk with.
- Ask for e-mail and fax number so that you can follow up in writing.
- Contact the Senator's office in the state to keep them in the loop.

If you have any questions, contact **Bob Bohlmann**, CEM, IAEM Government Affairs Committee Chairman, at rbohlmann@co.york.me.us, or **Martha Braddock**, IAEM Policy Advisor, at braddock@iaem.com.

Additional Information:

Senators who signed the Apr. 3, 2006 letter requesting an increase in Emergency Management Performance Grant funding to \$235 million in Fiscal Year 2007 appropriations for the Department of Homeland Security:

List of signers (same order as letter)

- | | |
|--------------------|------------------|
| Voinovich (R-OH) | Akaka (D-HI) |
| Collins (R-ME) | Lieberman (D-CT) |
| Baucus (D-MT) | Mikulski (D-MD) |
| Rockefeller (D-WV) | Martinez (R-FL) |
| Coleman (R-MN) | Johnson (D-SD) |

Stabenow (D-MI)	Kohl (D-WI)
Vitter (R-LA)	Feingold (D-WI)
Lautenberg (D-NJ)	Reed (D-RI)
Harkin (D-IA)	Salazar (R-CO)
Obama (D-IL)	Murkowski(R-AK)
Cantwell (D-WA)	Landrieu (D-LA)
Roberts (R-KS)	Carper (D-DE)
Durbin (D-IL)	Wyden (D-OR)
Pryor (D-AK)	Snowe (R-ME)
Biden (D-DE)	Allen (R-VA)
Graham (R-SC)	Levin (D-MI)
Kerry (D-MA)	Lott (R-MS)
Clinton (D-NY)	Dodd (D-CT)
Santorum (R-PA)	Warner(R-VA)
Kennedy (D-MA)	Jeffords (I-VT)
Bill Nelson (D-FL)	

Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Homeland Security:

Chairman Judd Gregg (NH)	Ranking Member Robert C. Byrd (WV)
Thad Cochran (MS)	Daniel Inouye (HI)
Ted Stevens (AK)	Patrick Leahy (VT)
Arlen Specter (PA)	Barbara Mikulski (MD)
Pete Domenici (NM)	Herb Kohl (WI)
Richard Shelby (AL)	Patty Murray (WA)
Larry Craig (ID)	Harry Reid (NV)
Robert Bennett (UT)	Dianne Feinstein (CA)
Wayne Allard (CO)	

Senate Full Committee on Appropriations:

Chairman Thad Cochran (MS)	Ranking Member Robert Byrd (WV)
Ted Stevens (AK)	Daniel Inouye (HI)
Arlen Specter (PA)	Patrick Leahy (VT)
Pete Domenici (NM)	Tom Harkin (IA)
Christopher Bond (MO)	Barbara Mikulski (MD)
Mitch McConnell (KY)	Harry Reid (NV)
Conrad Burns (MT)	Herb Kohl (WI)
Richard Shelby (AL)	Patty Murray (WA)
Judd Gregg (NH)	Byron Dorgan (ND)
Robert Bennett (UT)	Dianne Feinstein (CA)
Larry Craig (ID)	Richard Durbin (IL)
Kay Bailey Hutchison (TX)	Tim Johnson (SD)
Mike DeWine (OH)	Mary Landrieu (LA)
Sam Brownback (KS)	
Wayne Allard (CO)	