



February 22, 2011

The Honorable Mary Landrieu, Chairman
Subcommittee on Homeland Security
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Dan Coats, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Homeland Security
Committee on Appropriations
United State House Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Madam Chairman and Ranking Member Coats:

We wish to express our strong support for maintaining the Fiscal Year 2010 funding level of \$340 million for the Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG) as you consider the Continuing Resolution for FY 2011.

As the Presidents of the National Association of Counties, the National Emergency Management Association (NEMA), and the USA Council of the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM-USA), we represent the elected and appointed officials in the nation's 3068 counties, state emergency managers of all 50 states, territories, District of Columbia, and the Nation's more than 4,000 local government emergency managers.

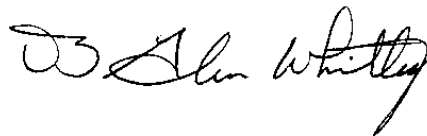
For more than five decades, EMPG has remained a performance-based program and continues to require a 50-50 match from state, local or tribal governments. Often referred to as the "backbone of the nation's emergency management system," EMPG allows State, tribal, and local governments the capacity to build and enhance their capability to mitigate, prepare, respond, and recover from disasters of all varieties. EMPG stands as the only source of federal funding directed to state and local governments for planning, training, exercises, and key professional expertise for all-hazards emergency preparedness.

The program also provides for public education and outreach, enhanced interoperable communications capabilities, and managing alerts and warnings. These programs and activities are critical to meeting the challenges associated with disasters; and, state and local governments are investing in their emergency management programs by meeting the Federal government's investment dollar-for-dollar even during these tough economic times.

When disaster strikes, the American people expect the Federal Government to respond when events exceed the capability of the state and local governments. Strong state and local programs reduce costs and the need for a Federal response. We urge you to maintain EMPG at the FY 2010 level and not allow the capability and capacity that emergency managers have worked to build since September 11, 2001 and Hurricane Katrina to be eroded by reducing funding to this vital program.

We welcome the opportunity to work with you and your staffs as you consider HR 1 and move the process to obtain Fiscal Year 2011 funding and again respectfully request you maintain 2010 levels for EMPG of \$340 million. Please contact our respective representatives in Washington, D.C. should you require additional information from either of our organizations. NACo Associate Legislative Director Dalen Harris can be contacted at 202-492-4236, IAEM Policy Advisor Martha Braddock can be contacted at 703-624-9284, and NEMA Director of Government Relations Matt Cowles can be reached at 202-624-5459.

Sincerely,



B. Glen Whitley, President
National Association of Counties



Jim Mullen, President
National Emergency Management Association



H.E. (Eddie) Hicks, CEM, President
United State Council
International Association of Emergency Managers