



General Principles Affecting Bills to Strengthen FEMA

Issue: Legislation To Strengthen FEMA

Background:

As a result of catastrophic events on the Gulf Coast of the United States in 2005, there has been significant activity within Congress to identify causes and make recommendations to improve emergency management, resulting in the drafting of a number of key bills.

Policy Position:

The basic principles that IAEM will use to evaluate those pieces of legislation are as follows:

1. Maximum amount of access of the FEMA Director to the White House.
2. FEMA clearly responsible for coordination of the Federal response to disasters.
3. Adequate funding, resources and personnel for FEMA that cannot be reallocated without legislative action.
4. Experienced, qualified and knowledgeable leadership in all key FEMA positions.
5. A culture of empowerment established and maintained within FEMA that promotes the maximum level of autonomy and supports the independent actions necessary to deal with the consequences of disaster.
6. The Principal Federal Official (PFO) position abolished, as it leads to confusion.
7. The FEMA regions strengthened.
8. Opportunities ensured for local emergency managers to have meaningful participation in the policy development process.
9. A return to established emergency management doctrine – all hazards, integrated, all phases (preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery). Preparedness returned to FEMA.

Approved: IAEM Board of Directors, June 4, 2006

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