



May 21, 2008

The Honorable James Oberstar
Chairman
Committee on Transportation and
Infrastructure
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D. C. 20515

The Honorable John Mica
Ranking Member
Committee on Transportation and
Infrastructure
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Eleanor Norton
Chairman
Subcommittee on Economic
Development, Public Buildings
and Emergency Management
Committee on Transportation and
Infrastructure
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D. C. 20515

The Honorable Sam Graves
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Economic
Development, Public Buildings
and Emergency Management
Committee on Transportation and
Infrastructure
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Oberstar and Ranking Member Mica and Chairwoman Norton and
Ranking Member Graves:

I am writing on behalf of the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM) to support H.R. 6109 as introduced on May 21, which amends the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to reauthorize the pre-disaster hazard mitigation program (PDM) for three years. We believe that PDM is an important program and urge quick action by the Congress to reauthorize PDM before its scheduled sunset on September 30, 2008.

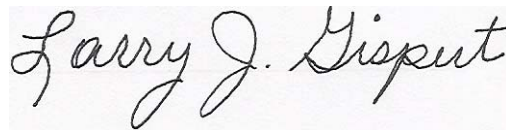
Although we have always known the great benefit to our communities, it is hard to calculate “damages avoided.” We were very pleased to see the Congressionally requested report by the Multi-Hazard Mitigation Council released in December of 2005 which stated that mitigation saves society an average of four dollars for every dollar spent. The study further stated that mitigation results in significant net benefits to society as a whole—to

individuals, to states and to communities—in terms of future reduced resource losses and savings to the Federal Treasury in terms of future increased tax revenues and future reduced hazard-related expenditures.

We would also like to thank the committee for holding hearings on the PDM program on April 30 and for giving Robert C. Bohlmann, the Emergency Management and Homeland Security Director for York County, Maine and Chair of the IAEM Government Affairs Committee an opportunity to provide testimony. We appreciate your committee's interest in obtaining the local perspective on key emergency management issues.

Please let us know if we can provide any additional information or be helpful in any way.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Larry J. Gispert". The signature is written in a cursive style and is centered on a white rectangular background.

Larry Gispert
President

International Association of Emergency Managers, 201 Park Washington Court, Falls Church, VA 22046.

The International Association of Emergency Managers has over 4,200 members including emergency management professionals at the state and local government levels, tribal nations, the military, colleges and universities, private business and the nonprofit sector in the United States and in other countries. Most of our members are U.S. city and county emergency managers who perform the crucial function of coordinating and integrating the efforts at the local level to prepare for, mitigate the effects of, respond to, and recover from all types of disasters including terrorist attacks. Our membership includes emergency managers from large urban areas as well as rural areas.

Contact information: Government Affairs Chair: Bob Bohlmann (rcbohlmann@co.york.me.us)
Policy Advisor: Martha Braddock (MSBraddock@aol.com).