# THE NATIONAL PREPAREDNESS REPORT: ASSESSING THE STATE OF PREPAREDNESS

## HEARING

BEFORE THE

## SUBCOMMITTEE ON EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS, RESPONSE, AND COMMUNICATIONS

OF THE

## COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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# THE NATIONAL PREPAREDNESS REPORT: ASSESSING THE STATE OF PREPAREDNESS

**Wednesday, June 6, 2012**

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS,
RESPONSE, AND COMMUNICATIONS,
COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY,
*Washington, DC.*

The subcommittee met, pursuant to call, at 12:07 p.m., in Room 311, Cannon House Office Building, Hon. Gus M. Bilirakis [Chairman of the subcommittee] presiding.

Present: Representatives Bilirakis, Farenthold, Turner, and Clarke.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. I believe it is afternoon. Good afternoon. The Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications will come to order.

The subcommittee is meeting today to receive testimony on the state of our Nation's preparedness.

I now recognize myself for an opening statement.

At the start of another hurricane season and with no evidence that the terrorist threat to the United States will decline, it is important that this subcommittee has an accurate picture of the level of preparedness across the country. Anecdotally, we are all aware of advancements made in preparedness. One need only look at the responses to the tornadoes in Joplin and Hurricane Irene to see evidence of enhanced preparedness and response capabilities at the State and local levels. However, there is more to the story, and it is my hope that the recently released National Preparedness Report will help us gain a better understanding of the work that remains to be done to ensure a prepared and resilient Nation.

It is important to note that this National Preparedness Report has been a long time coming. Section 652 of the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act requires the annual completion of a Federal preparedness report to assess National preparedness. The PPD–8, signed by President Obama in March 2011, further required the completion of a report assessing National preparedness. The first such report was completed in January 2009; however, another report was not completed until the National Preparedness Report was released last month.

There is no doubt that we have made great strides in our level of preparedness since September 11 and Hurricane Katrina. However, we must have the ability to measure that preparedness to determine steps still necessary to achieve core capabilities. It is my hope that this National Preparedness Report will mark the beginning of an annual assessment, as required by the PKEMRA, one that includes validated information received through surveys of stakeholders and that truly includes the input of the whole community.

I am pleased that Deputy Administrator Manning is here today to explain the methodology behind the report and how the report's findings, coupled with needed performance measures for the grant programs, will help inform efforts going forward to enhance core capabilities at the Federal, State, and local levels and with our nonprofit and private-sector partners. I hope that this will provide us with the frank assessment of the shortcomings identified in the report and the ways in which FEMA, working with the whole community, plans to address them.

I am particularly interested in the perspectives on this report of our experts on the second panel and from GAO. What are the strengths of this report, and how could future iterations be enhanced to provide a better picture of where we stand and where we need to go in the future?

With that, I welcome all our witnesses, and I look forward to your testimony on this very important topic.

Now I will recognize the Ranking Member, Mr. Hansen Clarke from Michigan, for any statement he may like to make. You are recognized, sir.

Mr. CLARKE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is an honor for me to serve with you today as the Ranking Member of this subcommittee for this hearing.

I want to thank the Chairman for holding this hearing to examine the findings of the National Preparedness Report. It is very important. It is important to me because I represent metropolitan Detroit, and since I have been in Congress the past year and a half, I have been a strong advocate for more funding for the Urban Areas Security Initiative and also for the Assistance to Firefighters Grants. We actually need this type of investment, and that is because our State and our local units of government, they don't have the revenue to be able to provide for the staffing and the equipment that we need to better protect our people.

Now, I am pleased that the Department of Homeland Security appropriations bill that we will be voting on soon, this week, in the House does contain an additional $400 million in additional funding to State and local grant programs. However, over the past few years, there has just been too much money cut out of the Assistance for Firefighters Grant program, and I think we need—in fact, I know we have to restore that funding.

Congress really needs to do much more to better protect our State and local communities, and I will tell you why. It is because Congress did not adequately regulate and monitor the housing crisis. That is the cause of why the cities and States don't have the revenue right now to help better protect their people. The housing crisis forced many families out of their homes, depressed property values, and overall dramatically reduced the tax base of many cities and States. So, as a result, they have less money to count on right now to better invest in National preparedness for their local communities and States.

I look forward to the testimony of Deputy Administrator Manning and also Mr. Czerwinski, especially your comments and insight, Mr. Czerwinski, on how the recently released National Disaster Recovery Framework could help better prepare communities to recover from natural disasters and emergencies, especially small businesses that need help reopening or families who are displaced when their house is burnt down or blown away, how they can get new housing again in a prompt fashion without having to spend more money that they have likely lost because of the emergency.

Also, I am interested to hear from both of you on how we can better improve our cybersecurity capabilities. As you are aware, the full Committee on Homeland Security recently considered legislation on this issue. I don't feel that it went far enough to protect us from cybersecurity threats. I would like to know how you believe that we could strengthen the bill that was reported out of this committee or other committees to better protect us from cybersecurity threats.

Before I yield back my time, I want to again thank Chairman Bilirakis for being thoughtful, conscientious. He understands the importance of keeping our country strong, investing in National preparedness. The fact that he is holding this hearing, again, just underscores his insight and why it is really a joy to work with him on this subcommittee.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Thank you. I appreciate it. Thanks for the nice comments.

I ask unanimous consent to insert in the record a letter from the BuildStrong Coalition.

Without objection, so ordered.

[The information follows:]

LETTER FROM THE BUILDSTRONG COALITION

JUNE 6, 2012.

The Honorable GUS BILIRAKIS,
*Chairman, Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications, Committee on Homeland Security, U.S. House of Representatives, H2–176 Ford House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515.*

Dear CHAIRMAN BILIRAKIS: The BuildStrong Coalition would like to thank you, Ranking Member Richardson, and the Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications for holding today's hearing on preparedness as we enter the 2012 Hurricane Season.

BuildStrong is coalition of National business and consumer organizations, companies, and emergency management officials dedicated to promoting stronger building codes to help communities withstand major natural disasters while saving lives and taxpayer money at the same time.

BUILDING CODES SAVE LIVES, PROPERTY, AND TAXPAYER MONEY

Overwhelming evidence exists to demonstrate that the adoption and enforcement of State-wide building codes saves lives and greatly reduces property damage and the need for Federal assistance resulting from disasters. The Louisiana State University Hurricane Center estimated that stronger building codes would have reduced wind damage from Hurricane Katrina by 80%, saving $8 billion.

In 2005, FEMA commissioned a study by the National Institute of Building Sciences' Multihazard Mitigation Council. The goal of the study, based on the work of more than 50 National experts, was to "assess the future savings from hazard mitigation activities." According to the study, every $1 spent on hazard mitigation (actions to reduce disaster losses) provides the Nation with about $4 in future benefits.

A study done for the Insurance Institute for Business & Home Safety (IBHS) found that losses from Hurricane Andrew, which struck south Florida in 1992 and caused more than $20 billion (in today's dollars) in insured damage, would have been reduced by 50 percent for residential property and by 40 percent for commercial property if those structures were built in accordance with Florida's 2004 State-wide building code. Another IBHS study following Hurricane Charley in 2004 found that modern building codes reduced the severity of property losses by 42 percent and the frequency of losses by 60 percent.

More valuable research is currently being conducted by the IBHS at their new lab in Richburg, South Carolina. This research already has clearly demonstrated how the human and financial costs of natural disasters can be greatly reduced by building stronger homes. With relatively simple upgrades in construction such as strapping to create a continuous load path from the roof, through the walls, and into the foundation, thicker roof decking, and textured, rather than smooth nails, test homes were built to withstand 110 mile-per-hour winds with little damage. Test homes with the same floor plan that were not upgraded, were completely destroyed at wind speeds of only 95 mph to 100 mph. Taking steps to prepare in these ways before a disaster has a real effect.

Despite this correlation, most States have not enacted State-wide building codes and related inspection and enforcement measures. State standards for construction, code-related inspection, and enforcement vary widely across the country. Where State-wide codes exist, it is not uncommon to allow individual jurisdictions (e.g., cities of a particular class, or counties) to deviate from the State standards, occasionally resulting in a weakening of the model minimum standards.

Model building codes govern all aspects of construction and help to protect homes and buildings from the devastating effects of natural catastrophes. Uniform, State-wide adoption and enforcement of model building codes by States helps to significantly reduce long-term risks affecting people, property, the environment, and ultimately the economy. The model codes, developed Nationally in the United States by a consensus process involving construction experts and local building officials working together, are adopted and enforced at the State level to mitigate effects of natural disaster perils inherent to each State.

## THE SAFE BUILDING CODE INCENTIVE ACT

The BuildStrong Coalition strongly supports H.R. 2069, The Safe Building Code Incentive Act, legislation providing States with additional disaster relief funding if they enact modern building codes.

The Safe Building Code Incentive Act would create a financial incentive for States that have adopted and enforce State-wide building codes. Under the proposed law, States that adopt and enforce Nationally recognized model building codes for residential and commercial structures would qualify for an additional 4 percent of funding available for post-disaster grants. The program would be administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Sixteen States currently enforce building codes that would already qualify for the additional 4 percent funding. Another 15 States would qualify with minor changes to current laws and regulations. As stated prior, this legislation will not require any additional appropriation to FEMA since it draws funds from the existing Disaster Relief Fund. In addition, the nature of the incentive does not mandate the adoption of State-wide building codes on any States that wish to maintain their current patchwork structure.

The evidence supporting mitigation benefits proves this incentive to be a fiscally responsible method of enabling FEMA to assist in natural disaster recovery while working to prevent future damage. The Safe Building Code Incentive Act is a forward-thinking, mitigation-focused legislative proposal that will display Congress's leadership in the midst of a heightened natural catastrophe year.

## CONCLUSION

While mitigation will not prevent natural catastrophes, stronger homes and businesses will save private property, Federal funds, environmental damage and insurance claims paid. Further, building codes contribute to the resiliency of a community and the ability of a community to "bounce back" from a hazard event. As a community begins the recovery process, the quicker businesses can return to full operation and citizens can return to their daily lives, the greater ability the local economy has to recover and lessen the burden on assistance providers. Most importantly, stronger homes and businesses save lives.

Again, BuildStrong would like to thank Chairman Bilirakis, Ranking Member Richardson, and the Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications for holding this important hearing.

Sincerely,

JIMI GRANDE,
*Chairman, BuildStrong Coalition.*

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Other Members of the subcommittee are reminded that opening statements may be submitted for the record.

[The statement of Ranking Member Thompson follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF RANKING MEMBER BENNIE G. THOMPSON

MAY 6, 2012

Good morning. I would like to thank the witnesses for being here today to discuss the long-awaited National Preparedness Report.

Reviewing the report, I was encouraged to learn that State and local governments have made significant progress in the areas of all-hazards planning, interoperable communications, and public health and medical services.

This report proved what many of us on this side of the aisle have been saying for quite some time: Targeted Homeland Security grants work.

When we target our resources to address gaps in capabilities, we become more prepared.

That said, having witnessed the suffering Hurricane Katrina brought, I was disturbed to learn that we have made little progress in developing the capabilities necessary to implement robust long-term recovery plans.

The National Preparedness Report indicates that States are less than half-way to achieving their preparedness capability objectives to ensure long-term recovery for economic activity, natural and cultural resources, and housing.

The Report candidly notes that recovery capabilities saw little investment by way of Federal grant dollars.

But funding is only part of the problem.

Over the past 3 years, the Government Accountability Office has issued a series of reports exploring the challenges of long-term recovery projects and identifying lessons learned from previous recovery efforts.

In particular, the GAO has indicated that confusion among stakeholders and the Federal Coordinator regarding their roles and functions during recovery efforts and a lack of clarity regarding decision-making authority have historically hindered successful recovery efforts.

In each report, the GAO has recommended strategies to address gaps in recovery capabilities, from facilitating better public-private partnerships to improve economic recovery to improving the effectiveness and efficiency of Public Assistance Grant program.

I understand that many of GAO's recommendations are addressed in the National Disaster Recovery Framework.

While it appears that some progress has been made, it is unclear whether additional movement forward is likely.

I am mindful of NEMA's report which finds that funding has been relatively flat at State and local emergency management agencies.

In most places, these agencies plan and oversee long-term recovery efforts.

And given the discussion on long-term recovery, I would be remiss if I did not briefly mention the findings in a GAO report released last week on FEMA's Disaster Assistance Workforce.

It found that FEMA lacks hiring standards for Disaster Assistance Employees, who comprise 57 percent of FEMA's workforce and play a major role in recovery efforts.

GAO also found that FEMA does not provide DAEs with uniform training.

Without uniform hiring standards and uniform training, it should come as no surprise that DAEs do not have uniform skill sets.

Yet, even more troubling is GAO's finding that FEMA lacks a uniform process for monitoring how DAEs implement disaster policies from region to region.

In light of gaps in recovery capabilities identified in the National Preparedness Report, the GAO's findings regarding DAEs are particularly concerning.

I will be interested to learn how FEMA intends to address the long-term recovery issues.

I look forward to the testimony of the witnesses and yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. I am pleased to welcome now our first panel of witnesses.

Our first witness is Mr. Tim Manning. Mr. Manning is FEMA's Deputy Administrator for Protection and National Preparedness, a position to which he was confirmed by the U.S. Senate on May 6, 2009. Prior to joining FEMA, Administrator Manning served as secretary of the New Mexico Department of Homeland Security and homeland security advisor to Governor Richardson. Mr. Manning has served as a firefighter and emergency medical technician. He earned his bachelor's of science degree in geology from Eastern Illinois University and is a graduate of the Executive Leaders Program at the Center for Homeland Defense and Security at the Naval Postgraduate School.

Following Administrator Manning, we will receive testimony from Mr. Stanley Czerwinski. Mr. Czerwinski is the director of intergovernmental relations at the U.S. Government Accountability Office. Prior to this position, he served as GAO's comptroller and as the director or assistant director for various issues. Prior to joining GAO, Mr. Czerwinski worked at both the Congressional Research Service and Congressional Budget Office. He has a master's degree in public administration from the University of Massachusetts and a bachelor's degree from Wesleyan University in Connecticut.

Welcome. Your entire written statements will appear in the record. I ask that you each summarize your testimony for 5 minutes.

Administrator Manning, you are now recognized. Thank you, sir.

**STATEMENT OF TIMOTHY W. MANNING, DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR, PROTECTION AND NATIONAL PREPAREDNESS, FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY**

Mr. MANNING. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good morning, Members of the committee.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Good morning.

Mr. MANNING. I am Tim Manning, FEMA's Deputy Administrator for Protection and National Preparedness. On behalf of Secretary Napolitano and Administrator Fugate, I thank you for the invitation to testify today.

Since the September 2001 terrorist attacks, we have made significant and measurable strides toward improving preparedness for all hazards, including terrorism, natural disasters, and technological hazards. This administration arrived recognizing the significant progress that had been made in improving the Nation's preparedness since September 2001. We also recognized that we lacked the measuring systems and, in many cases, the data that would allow us to answer definitively the question we are being asked by the American people: Are we better prepared?

We are better prepared. Based on our work, we can better articulate what we are prepared for and where our capabilities lie. For example, Federal, State, and local governments have, since 2001, built a network of specialized teams capable of interdicting and disrupting a variety of imminent threats. That network includes over a thousand hazardous materials response teams, 5,400 SWAT teams, and 469 FBI-trained and accredited bomb teams. Prior to

2001, major population centers in many parts of the country lacked advanced structural collapse and urban search and rescue capabilities. Today, 97 percent of the Nation's population is within a 4-hour response drive time of an urban search and rescue team.

The National Preparedness Report developed pursuant to "Presidential Policy Directive 8: National Preparedness" and the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act was recently submitted to the President and provided to Congress. In preparing the report, FEMA worked with a wide range of community partners and individuals to identify quantitative and qualitative performance and assessment data. Data were integrated from the 2011 State preparedness reports, and we conducted our own research into independent evaluations, surveys, and other supporting data related to those core capabilities.

Key findings and insights on critical preparedness issues were identified, including areas of progress and where areas for improvement remain. A number of broad trends emerged.

First, the Nation has developed areas of National strength in several core capabilities, particularly in cross-cutting common capabilities and those that support responses to disasters, including: planning; operational coordination; intelligence and information sharing; environmental response, health, and safety; mass search and rescue operations; operational communications; and public health and medical services.

Second, Federal preparedness assistance programs have helped build and enhance State and local, Tribal, and territorial capabilities. Federal grants have clearly contributed to the capability gains achieved since 9/11.

Third, identified areas of National strength align with the investments made using Federal assistance. The most progress has been made in capabilities identified as high priorities by our State and local partners. Since 2006, Federal grantees have used over $7 billion in preparedness assistance from the Department of Homeland Security to support those core capabilities identified as areas of National strength, particularly public health and medical services, operational communications and planning. Conversely, some core capabilities identified as needing improvement have not historically received significant investment by grantees, particularly recovery-focused and cybersecurity-focused core capabilities.

Fourth, the Nation has made demonstrable progress in addressing areas for improvement identified after September 11 and Hurricane Katrina.

The former identified challenges in multidisciplinary operational coordination, and, as a result, the National Incident Management System, or NIMS, was adopted as the common doctrine for incident management across the country, and more than 4 million community partners have received some form of NIMS training. All States, Tribes, and territories now report complete compliance with NIMS.

The 9/11 attacks also revealed limited information sharing of actionable intelligence across the Government and within the private sector. Development of a National network of fusion centers, joint terrorism task forces, and standardized policies and procedures for sharing suspicious activity reports have greatly improved our capabilities in this area.

Both events identified difficulties in communications interoperability within and across jurisdictions. With significant support from Congress, high-risk urban areas throughout the Nation have built and demonstrated the capability to achieve full-response-level interoperable communications within 1 hour of an emergency.

These examples represent measurable outcomes in our National effort toward increased preparedness and have demonstrated their value in real-world events.

The National Preparedness Report represents a step forward in our efforts to assess overall National preparedness and serves as a baseline evaluation of the progress made toward building, sustaining, and delivering the core capabilities described in the National Preparedness Goal. Future efforts will focus on developing measures and assessment methodologies that will guide the annual development of the National Preparedness Report.

Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to testify today, and I am happy to answer any questions the committee may have.

[The statement of Mr. Manning follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF TIMOTHY W. MANNING

JUNE 6, 2012

Mr. Chairman and Members of the subcommittee, good morning. I am Timothy Manning, deputy administrator for protection and national preparedness at the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). On behalf of Secretary Napolitano and Administrator Fugate, I thank you for the invitation to testify today on the state of our Nation's preparedness.

We appreciate the committee's continued interest in and support for National preparedness. We also appreciate your interest in defining and measuring the progress we have made over more than a decade of considerable effort.

Since the September 2001 terrorist attacks, we have made significant and measurable strides toward improving preparedness for the hazards faced by all levels of government and all segments of society. We have improved our preparedness for the threats posed by those who wish to bring us harm as well as for the myriad natural and technological hazards that face our communities face every day.

This administration came into office recognizing the significant progress that had been made in improving the Nation's preparedness since September 2001 and cognizant of the need to better understand and explain that progress—both qualitatively and quantitatively. As former first responders, local emergency managers and State homeland security officials, Administrator Fugate, Deputy Administrator Serino and I understood that the investments made by the American people over nearly a decade have significantly improved the capabilities and readiness of our police, fire-fighters, emergency medical technicians, public health workers, and other first responders. But we also recognized that we lacked the measuring systems and, in many cases, the data that would allow us to answer the question we were being asked by Congress, by the President, and by the American people: Are we better prepared now than we were on September 11, 2001?

We are better prepared, and based on our work over the past few years we can better articulate what we are prepared for and where our capabilities reside. To cite just a few examples:

- In the 4 years between 2006 and 2010, the proportion of States and urban areas that were confident in the effectiveness of their emergency operations plans increased from 40 percent to more than 75 percent;
- Commercial radio broadcasters, in partnership with FEMA, today can deliver public warning messages to more than 84 percent of the U.S. population, up from 67 percent in 2009. By the end of 2013, coverage is expected to expand to more than 90 percent of the population;
- Since 2001, Federal, State, and local governments have built a network of specialized teams capable of interdicting and disrupting a variety of imminent

threats. That network includes 1,100 Hazardous Materials Response Teams, 5,400 SWAT teams, and 469 FBI-trained and accredited bomb squads;

- Prior to the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, major population centers in many parts of the country lacked structural collapse and urban search-and-rescue capabilities. Today, 97 percent of the Nation is within a 4-hour drive of an urban search-and-rescue team; and
- Government agencies at all levels have improved their strategic and tactical communications planning and coordination. In 2006, only 42 percent of the Nation's urban areas had a strategic plan in place to guide interoperable communications. Today, 100 percent of the Nation's highest-risk urban areas are capable of establishing response-level interoperable communications within 1 hour of an event involving multiple jurisdictions and agencies.

But preparedness is not an end-state; it is a process. As the threats and hazards we face as a Nation emerge and evolve, so too must the capabilities and resources we need to address those threats and hazards. Similarly, we must sustain those capabilities that prepare us for the enduring threats and hazards we face. We increasingly understand where we have additional work to do—and we now have a system in place to help us focus on those areas.

In March 2011, President Obama signed Presidential Policy Directive 8: National Preparedness (PPD–8), which describes the Nation's approach to preparing for the threats and hazards that pose the greatest risk to the security of the United States. This Directive required the establishment of a National Preparedness Goal—an overall target that the entire Nation will strive to achieve; the development of a National Preparedness System to provide the processes for achieving the Goal and for measuring our collective progress along the way; and an annual National Preparedness Report to summarize progress.

The National Preparedness Goal delivered to the President in October 2011 describes 31 core capabilities—identified and defined through a collaborative process involving Federal departments and agencies, State and local government officials, and individuals from across the entire community—that we as a Nation must build and sustain in order to prevent, protect against, mitigate, respond to, and recover from the threats and hazards that pose the greatest risk to the Nation. Those capabilities include activities such as intelligence and information sharing; screening, search, and detection; vulnerability reduction; mass care services; housing; and economic recovery, to name just a few.

The National Preparedness System, described in a report submitted to the President in November 2011, is a process for achieving the National Preparedness Goal. It is best described as an on-going cycle which begins with identifying and assessing the risks a jurisdiction faces and then proceeds to include an estimating the capabilities needed to address those risks, building or sustaining the required levels of capability, developing and implementing plans to deliver those capabilities, validating and monitoring progress, and reviewing and updating efforts to promote continuous improvement.

## THE NATIONAL PREPAREDNESS REPORT

The product of that validation and monitoring process is the National Preparedness Report, which we recently submitted to the President and provided to Congress. In preparing the report, FEMA worked with a range of community partners—including all levels of government, private and nonprofit sectors, faith-based organizations, communities, and individuals to identify quantitative and qualitative performance and assessment data for each of the 31 core capabilities described in the National Preparedness Goal. In addition, FEMA integrated data from the 2011 State Preparedness Reports (SPRs), State-wide self-assessments of core capability levels submitted by all 56 U.S. States and territories through a standardized survey. Finally, FEMA staff conducted their own research to identify recent, independent evaluations, surveys, and other supporting data related to those core capabilities.

Our synthesis, review, and analysis of those data sources resulted in several key findings and insights on critical preparedness issues, including areas where the Nation has made progress and where areas for improvement remain. During our analysis of the data on the core capabilities, a number of broad trends in National preparedness emerged:

First, the Nation has developed areas of National strength in several core capabilities, particularly in cross-cutting, common capabilities and those that support responses to disasters. Preparedness capabilities have improved significantly since 2001, as a result of concerted effort through planning, organization, equipment, training, exercises, and dedicated funding provided by Congress, States, Tribes, territories, and localities. Some areas of strength pre-date the September 11, 2001

(9/11) terrorist attacks, while others have developed in the years since. Areas of overall National strength as identified in the National Preparedness Report include:

- Planning;
- Operational Coordination;
- Intelligence and Information Sharing;
- Environmental Response/Health and Safety;
- Mass Search and Rescue Operations;
- Operational Communications; and,
- Public Health and Medical Services.

These strengths involve contributions from across the whole community. State, local, Tribal, and territorial partners have built a network of multi-disciplinary capabilities that they use to manage the vast majority of emergencies. When disasters strike, Federal partners, the private and nonprofit sectors, faith-based organizations, and the public stand ready to augment existing State, local, Tribal, and territorial response capabilities and to help provide many of the essential services outlined in the core capabilities.

Second, Federal preparedness assistance programs have helped build and enhance State, local, Tribal, and territorial capabilities through multi-year grant investments across mission areas. Federal preparedness assistance has clearly contributed to the capability gains achieved since 9/11, and partner organizations from across the whole community rely on Federal preparedness grants from a number of Federal Departments and Agencies to build core capabilities. DHS' Homeland Security Grant Program includes a suite of programs designed to support the building and maintaining of core capabilities, and Health and Human Services' preparedness grant programs administered by the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) support State, local, and territorial jurisdictions in improving public health and health care preparedness.

Third, areas of National strength align with the investments made using Federal assistance programs, and the most progress has been made in capabilities identified as high priorities. Since 2006, Federal grantees have used more than $7.3 billion in preparedness assistance from DHS to support the core capabilities identified in the National Preparedness Report as areas of National strength, specifically Public Health and Medical Services, Operational Communications, and Planning.

Conversely, some core capabilities identified as needing improvement have not historically received significant investments by grantees via preparedness grants. For example, while Federal grant programs have increasingly sought to emphasize the importance of cyber preparedness in recent years, State and local grant-funded investments aligned with the cybersecurity core capability have been minimal. Similarly, States and local jurisdictions have invested less than 1 percent of DHS non-disaster preparedness assistance from fiscal year 2006 to fiscal year 2010 in recovery-focused capabilities.

The link between investment and improved capability also reflects the priority placed on each capability by State and local governments. In the 2011 State Preparedness Report, States were asked to rate each of the core capabilities as being a high, medium, or low priority. Operational Communications, Operational Coordination, Public Health, and Medical Services and Planning were four of the top-five-listed high-priority capabilities and each aligns to National strengths and is an area in which States reported relatively more progress toward achieving preparedness goals. Similarly, two of the lowest-priority capabilities identified in the State Preparedness Report, Health and Social Services and Natural and Cultural Resources, fall within the Recovery mission area and are identified as areas in which States reported less progress toward achieving preparedness goals. One interesting finding in the State Preparedness Report data is that while approximately two-thirds of States identified housing, economic recovery, and cybersecurity as high-priority capabilities, they also reported being the least prepared in those areas. These results further underscore that cyber-security and the recovery-focused core capabilities should be areas for future emphasis and investment.

Fourth, the Nation has made demonstrable progress in addressing areas for improvement identified after 9/11 and Hurricane Katrina. Both the 9/11 attacks and Hurricane Katrina highlighted gaps in preparedness activities Nation-wide and served as catalysts for change. The 9/11 Commission and the White House after-action review of the Federal response to Hurricane Katrina identified dozens of recommendations. For example, the 9/11 attacks identified challenges in conducting multi-disciplinary operational coordination on-site at incidents and among operations centers. As a result, the National Incident Management System (NIMS) was adopted as the common doctrine for incident management, and more than 4 million whole community partners have received some form of NIMS training. All States, Tribes, and territories now report compliance with NIMS.

Hurricane Katrina also revealed significant weaknesses in catastrophic emergency planning. As a result, National planning-related guidance was developed and funding was directed to this capability. Subsequent Nation-wide Plan Reviews have demonstrated significant improvements in State and urban area confidence in their catastrophic plans.

The 9/11 attacks also revealed limited information sharing of actionable intelligence across the Government and with the private sector. Development of a National network of fusion centers, Joint Terrorism Task Forces, and standardized policies and processes for sharing suspicious activity reports have greatly improved this preparedness activity.

Similarly, both the 9/11 attacks and Hurricane Katrina identified difficulties in communications interoperability within and across jurisdictions. In ensuing years and with significant support from Congress through the Public Safety Interoperable Communications and other grant programs, high-risk urban areas throughout the Nation have demonstrated the capability to achieve full response-level interoperable communications within 1 hour of an emergency.

Finally, decision-makers in the public and private sectors increasingly are using risk analysis to shape and prioritize preparedness activities across mission areas. PPD–8 and the Goal emphasize the important role that risk—defined simply as the potential for an unwanted outcome—plays in informing preparedness activities. Faced with a range of threats and hazards and constrained by available resources, whole community partners are increasingly using risk analyses to inform policy and programmatic decisions across all five preparedness mission areas.

For example:

- Federal interagency partners conducted a Strategic National Risk Assessment to help identify potential incidents that pose the greatest threat to the Nation and to inform the development of core capabilities and targets in the Goal;
- DHS developed an annual National Risk Profile for the Nation's critical infrastructure, describing risks facing the Nation's infrastructure sectors and supporting public- and private-sector risk management decisions;
- Traditional mitigation planning has broadened to include both natural hazards and terrorist threats in order to identify a comprehensive suite of potential mitigation actions;
- State and local public health departments are required to use jurisdictional risk assessments to prioritize capability enhancements through preparedness assistance from HHS ASPR and CDC;
- Risk analysis informs eligibility criteria for preparedness assistance, including the State Homeland Security Program, Urban Areas Security Initiative, Port Security Grant Program, Transit Security Grant Program, and the CDC Public Health Emergency Preparedness cooperative agreement program;
- On-going efforts to implement the National Preparedness System, as called for in PPD–8, further emphasize the importance of risk analyses in driving preparedness activities. The National Preparedness System emphasizes the need to identify and assess risks in order to guide efforts to develop, maintain, and assess core capabilities; and
- States are required to conduct Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessments (THIRA) as a condition of receiving most preparedness grant funding and set hazard-based targets as the context for their State Preparedness Report capability assessments.

The requirement that States conduct a THIRA as a condition of receiving preparedness grant funding, has become the source of much discussion over the past few months. I would like to take a few moments to clarify what THIRAs will—and will not—be used for.

Moving forward, States and territories will be required to conduct Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessments (THIRA) as a condition for receiving homeland security grants. The THIRA process provides a comprehensive approach for identifying and assessing risks and associated impacts. It expands on existing local, Tribal, territorial, and State Hazard Identification and Risk Assessments (HIRAs) and other risk methodologies currently used by broadening the factors considered in the process, incorporating the whole community throughout the process, and accounting for important community-specific characteristics.

The use of risk analysis is a long-standing and important first step in the emergency management community. State and local governments are very familiar with the use of Hazard Identification and Risk Assessments to help them drive investments in mitigation activities. The THIRA process is very similar, but adds a terrorism component to account for the possibility of deliberate threats.

The THIRA process is a step-by-step analysis that can be used by emergency management offices in small towns and by large urban areas with access to advanced analytical capabilities. While the level of detail may be greater for an urban area than for a rural community, the methodology for both will be similar and both will have, as a result, a comparable foundation for informed decision making. Critical to the security and resilience of our communities is knowledge of the level of capabilities needed to prevent, protect against, mitigate, respond and recover from our greatest risks. Using THIRA results, communities will gain a greater understanding of their risk landscape and can therefore evaluate current capabilities against known threats and hazards and identify resources available to meet the identified needs. By estimating their resource requirements, jurisdictions can make decisions about how they will effectively use their resources to deliver core capabilities toward their community's greatest risk. The THIRAs and assessments such as State Preparedness Reports will identify gaps in preparedness at the State and local levels and drive investment towards building and sustaining core capabilities to address those gaps.

Based on the assessments of what we've achieved and what we have yet to accomplish, and in light of the National Preparedness Goal and System, we proposed a new National Preparedness Grant Program to re-align existing grant programs to focus on sustaining capabilities developed, building new capabilities to fill the identified gaps, preventing terrorism, protecting critical transportation and port infrastructure, and other key resources. We propose to do this by consolidating programs, streamlining the application process and better focusing our efforts.

CONCLUSION

With the October 2011 release of the National Preparedness Goal, the Nation is transitioning to a refined set of core capabilities. As a result, whole community partners are updating their efforts to collect, analyze, and report preparedness progress according to the core capabilities identified in the Goal. The 2012 National Preparedness Report therefore relies on a range of existing assessment approaches and associated quantitative and qualitative data to present the Nation's preparedness progress and to report key findings. Assessment processes, methodologies, and data will evolve in future years to align more directly with the Goal and its capabilities. Efforts are already underway to refine the Goal's capabilities and preliminary targets; future efforts will focus on developing agreed-upon measures and assessment methodologies that will guide the annual development of the National Preparedness Report.

Since the release of the 2012 National Preparedness Report, we have begun to embark on an outreach campaign to engage whole community stakeholders in a discussion of the current findings and solicit input for future reports. We expect to receive substantial feedback from State, local, Tribal, and territorial stakeholders, as well as the private and non-profit sectors on the findings from the National Preparedness Report and areas for improvement. To broaden this outreach effort, we are using social media including on-line collaboration forums to solicit ideas on areas for improvement identified in the NPR. These areas include cybersecurity, recovery-focused core capabilities, access and functional needs, and supply chain interdependencies.

The National Preparedness Report represents a step forward in efforts to assess overall National preparedness. Informed by inputs from across the whole community, the 2012 National Preparedness Report serves as a baseline evaluation of the progress made toward building, sustaining, and delivering the core capabilities described in the Goal. Building on these efforts, the vision for future Reports is to establish a routine, repeatable process that engages whole community partners.

To achieve the National Preparedness Goal, the Nation must continue to build on the significant progress we have made to date and to address areas identified for improvement. To do so, we will continue to engage whole community partners as we revise and develop the National Preparedness Frameworks and Federal Interagency Operations Plans called for in PPD–8. The components of the National Preparedness System will provide a consistent and reliable approach to support decision-making, resource allocation, and on-going performance assessment.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify, and I am happy to answer any questions the committee may have.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Thank you, Mr. Manning.

Mr. Czerwinski, you are recognized for 5 minutes.

**STATEMENT OF STANLEY J. CZERWINSKI, DIRECTOR, INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS, U.S. GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE**

Mr. CZERWINSKI. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am pleased to be here today to talk about GAO's work looking at long-term recovery.

In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, the Congress asked GAO to undertake a number of studies, including reviews of the Office of Federal Coordinator; HUD's Community Development Block Grant Program, CDBG; and FEMA's public assistance and long-term recovery efforts. Those reviews went up through 2010. What I would like to do is to highlight a few high-level themes and lessons from those today.

The first one is that there are so many Federal agencies and programs, about 14 Federal agencies, over 60 programs, that have to come together for recovery. Sometimes they don't come together quite the way you want.

For example, in Louisiana, after Katrina, the State had a Road Home Program that was geared toward rebuilding housing in the State. The plan of this program was to take money from CDBG and rebuild the houses and then match that up with money from hazard mitigation out of FEMA to elevate the houses. So the idea would be you would build the houses and put them on a safer plain for future floods. That never came to pass because of differences in the two programs' rules. That is just one example of how sometimes the Feds have a hard time making things match up.

As you mentioned in your opening statement, another key player is State and local governments. So it is really important that the Federal Government work effectively with their State and local partners. Sometimes a really simple idea can turn out to work out very well.

We have one for Mississippi, also after Katrina. What happened there was that FEMA and the State of Mississippi decided to collocate their staffs in Biloxi. Then the State of Mississippi used a grant from FEMA to procure an accounting system. This accounting system provided both the State and the Federal partners with real-time on-line accountability data for what was going on with their projects. What we found in looking at this is this dramatically improved the collaboration and coordination and had better decision-making.

The third point that I want to talk about is that sometimes it is really important just to take a step back from what you are doing and ask, is what I am doing accomplishing what I want it to do?

We have an example from Kobe, Japan, on this. As you might recall, in 1995 a massive earthquake struck Kobe, Japan. Kobe is in what is called the Hyogo prefecture; that is the equivalent of a U.S. county. The idea that the Japanese had—and this was a really good idea—was to say, you know, during a disaster and recovery from it, we want to put special attention to those populations with special needs. Their plan was for the elderly, to take them and put them in recovery areas, build units, provide all the services you need, self-contained to make it very simple.

Then the Japanese had a good idea; they said, let's see how this worked. When they looked at it, they had a surprise. Because even though on a service level it really worked, it had some unintended consequences, and that is, they isolated the elderly population from the rest of their families. As you know, in the Japanese culture, the extended family is really important.

The message in this is that sometimes when you take a step back and look at how well you did, the next time it helps you do better.

In that same vein, the U.S. Congress—and you cited this in your opening statement, Mr. Chairman—required certain things for FEMA and others to do after Katrina so we could avoid future problems. One of those was to come up with a strategy for recovering from disasters. That requirement resulted in the National Disaster Recovery Framework, the NDRF.

We have taken a look at the NDRF, and we think it is a really good first step, in that it contains all the points that I made. However, I want to emphasize the first step. Because behind that overall strategy, you need to have plans for how it is implemented. The contrast that I draw is between the National response framework and the National recovery framework. Behind the response framework, you have probably 500 to 1,000 pages of detailed plans for what each agency is going to do. We haven't gotten there yet on recovery.

In addition, even though it is nice to have plans, what you want to do then is you want to practice them, because that is how they become real, that is how people engage. Then you want to take a step back and evaluate them. Then once your evaluation shows you something, you say, well, what lesson did I learn? It sort of feeds back.

So my point is that, on recovery, we are at a relatively early stage that could be greatly enhanced by further implementation plans, further practice, further evaluation, further revision from what we learn. If we do that, we believe we have the ability to really improve recovery from disasters in this country.

That concludes my statement, Mr. Chairman. I am glad to respond to any questions that you have.

[The statement of Mr. Czerwinski follows:]

## PREPARED STATEMENT OF STANLEY J. CZERWINSKI

JUNE 6, 2012

### GAO HIGHLIGHTS

Highlights of GAO–12–813T, a testimony before the Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications, Committee on Homeland Security, House of Representatives.

*Why GAO Did This Study*

The many challenges and difficulties experienced in the wake of Hurricane Katrina and other catastrophes have led to considerable reflection on what lessons might be learned regarding disaster recovery. Congress has recognized the importance of improving the way our Nation approaches disaster recovery by including in the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006 the requirement that FEMA develop a National Disaster Recovery Strategy. The administration has also placed a greater focus on recovery, as demonstrated by its development of the National Disaster Recovery Framework (NDRF) with the goal of helping Federal agencies and others to more effectively organize in order to promote recovery.

GAO was asked to testify on themes from its previous work on disaster recovery that may assist the subcommittee in its oversight of disaster recovery issues.

*What GAO Recommends*

In multiple reports between 2008 and 2010, we made several recommendations to FEMA and others addressing recovery challenges involving coordination, communication, and information sharing, among other topics. The NDRF is directly responsive to several of the recommendations contained in these reports. However, it will require the successful implementation of this framework in order to ultimately resolve these issues.

DISASTER RECOVERY.—SELECTED THEMES FOR EFFECTIVE LONG-TERM RECOVERY

*What GAO Found*

From 2008 to 2010, GAO produced a body of work on disaster recovery, including reviews of the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Long-Term Community Recovery efforts, recovery lessons based on past experiences at home and abroad, the use of Community Development Block Grants and Public Assistance grants and the operation of the Office of the Federal Coordinator for Gulf Coast Rebuilding (OFC). Among other things, this work highlighted themes that are important to successful disaster recovery efforts. Three of these key themes are: (1) The need for clearly-defined recovery roles and responsibilities; (2) the importance of effective coordination and collaboration among recovery stakeholders; and (3) the value of periodic evaluation of, and reporting on, recovery progress.

When recovering from a major disaster, having clearly defined and well-understood roles and responsibilities is a critical first step in coordinating and implementing the responsibilities of the various parties involved in the long-term recovery process. These roles, responsibilities, and lines of authority for all levels of Government must be clearly defined, communicated, and understood in order to be effective. GAO's previous work provides numerous examples of the challenges that result when this does not take place and, conversely, illustrations of benefits that can occur when it does. For example, GAO's 2009 review of the OFC found confusion and disagreements among key recovery stakeholders as well as with the Federal Coordinator himself regarding the office's appropriate scope and function. This confusion, accompanied by the lack of clear decision-making authority on the part of OFC, may have ultimately slowed down the resolution of some recovery problems.

Recovery from a major disaster is a long, complex process that involves an extensive group of participants both across the Federal Government and at the State and local level. At least 14 Federal departments and agencies are responsible for administering dozens of recovery-related programs, many of which rely heavily on active participation by State and local government for their implementation. Because these parties are dependent on each other to accomplish recovery goals, effective coordination and collaboration is essential. GAO's past work has explored this issue in considerable detail. For example, in the wake of the 2008 Midwest floods, Federal, State, and local officials said that FEMA's facilitation of regular interagency meetings to coordinate Federal and State partners helped to identify and effectively leverage recovery resources, as well as identify coordination problems and other concerns.

Finally, the collaboration between recovery partners can be enhanced by periodically evaluating and reporting on what worked, what can be improved, and what progress is still needed to address long-term recovery goals. This last step will assist decision makers, clients, and stakeholders to obtain the feedback needed to improve both the policy and operational effectiveness of recovery efforts. For example, after a 1995 earthquake, the city of Kobe, Japan and the surrounding region held periodic external reviews over a span of 10 years on the progress made toward achieving recovery goals. As a result, the city of Kobe gained insight into unintended consequences of how it relocated elderly earthquake victims, which subsequently led to a change in policy.

Chairman Bilirakis, Ranking Member Richardson, and Members of the subcommittee: I appreciate the opportunity to discuss with you today some key themes from GAO's previous work on long-term recovery after disasters. In contrast to the response phase, which takes place in the immediate aftermath of a disaster and focuses on essential lifesaving activities, recovery is a much longer process that can last years or sometimes decades where attention shifts to restoring both the individual and the community, including the redevelopment of damaged areas. The many recovery challenges experienced after Hurricane Katrina affected the Gulf Coast in 2005—including difficulties with coordination, communication, and the loss of attention and focus—during the long recovery process, have led to considerable reflection on what lessons might be learned in how we, as a Nation, approach disaster recovery. Congress has recognized the importance of improving the way our Nation approaches disaster recovery by including in the Post-Katrina Emergency

Management Reform Act of 2006 (PKEMRA) the requirement that the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) develop a National Disaster Recovery Strategy.[1]

We also have seen the administration place a greater focus on the issue of recovery, as demonstrated by its development of—for the first time ever—a National Disaster Recovery Framework (NDRF) with the goal of helping Federal agencies and others to more effectively organize in order to promote recovery. This effort represents a welcomed emphasis on thinking seriously about the challenges and possibilities presented by the disaster recovery process, and the NDRF generally represents a step in the right direction. Yet challenges in this area remain. As the recently issued 2012 National Preparedness Report points out, States and territories ranked core capabilities related to disaster recovery among the lowest of all the areas assessed.

With this in mind, and as agreed with the subcommittee, my testimony today will focus on three themes drawn from our previous work on disaster recovery that may prove useful in the subcommittee's on-going oversight of disaster recovery issues. These themes are: (1) The need for clearly-defined recovery roles and responsibilities; (2) the importance of effective coordination and collaboration among recovery stakeholders; and (3) the value of periodic evaluation of, and reporting on, recovery progress.

My statement is largely based on a body of work that we have developed on the topic of disaster recovery that dates from 2008 to 2010. These include our March 2010 review of FEMA's Long-Term Community Recovery Branch (LTCR) in providing and coordinating assistance to support long-term recovery; a July 2009 report that identified recovery lessons based on past experiences at home and abroad; an April 2009 examination of the use Community Development Block Grants on the Gulf Coast; an April 2009 overview of the Office of the Federal Coordinator for Gulf Coast Rebuilding (OFC); as well as our December 2008 examination of FEMA's Public Assistance Grant program.[2] These reports contain multiple recommendations to FEMA and others aimed at addressing recovery challenges involving coordination, communication, and information sharing, among others. The NDRF is directly responsive to several of the recommendations contained in these reports; however it will require the successful implementation of this framework in order to ultimately resolve these issues. More complete information on our scope and methodology, findings, and recommendations is available in each published report.

We conducted these reviews in accordance with generally accepted Government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

## CLEARLY DEFINING RECOVERY ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES IS A CRITICAL FIRST STEP FOR EFFECTIVE RECOVERY

When recovering from a disaster, having clearly-defined and well-understood roles and responsibilities is a critical first step in coordinating and implementing the responsibilities of the various parties involved in the long-term recovery process. Roles, responsibilities, and lines of authority at all levels of government must be clearly defined, communicated, and understood in order to be effective. Our previous work provides examples of the challenges that result when this does not take place, and conversely, illustrations of benefits that can occur when it does, which I describe below.

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[1] The Post-Katrina Act was enacted as Title VI of the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2007, Pub. L. No. 109–295, 120 Stat. 1355 (2006). Most provisions of the Post-Katrina Act became effective upon enactment, October 4, 2006, Under PKEMRA, DHS was required to submit a National Disaster Recovery Strategy no later than 270 days after enactment.

[2] See GAO, *Disaster Recovery: FEMA's Long-term Assistance Was Helpful to State and Local Governments but Had Some Limitations,* GAO–10–404 (Washington, DC: Mar. 30, 2010); *Disaster Recovery: Experiences From Past Disasters Offer Insights for Effective Collaboration After Catastrophic Events,* GAO–09–811 (Washington, DC: July 31, 2009); *Gulf Coast Disaster Recovery: Community Development Block Grant Program Guidance to States Needs to Be Improved,* GAO–09–541 (Washington, DC: June 19, 2009); *Office of the Federal Coordinator for Gulf Coast Rebuilding: Perspectives and Observations,* GAO–09–411R (Washington, DC: Apr. 10, 2009); *Disaster Recovery: FEMA's Public Assistance Grant Program Experienced Challenges With Gulf Coast Rebuilding,* GAO–09–129 (Washington, DC: Dec. 18, 2008); *Disaster Recovery: Past Experiences Offer Insights for Recovering From Hurricanes Ike and Gustav and Other Recent Natural Disasters,* GAO–08–1120 (Washington, DC: Sept. 26, 2008).

Our 2009 review of the operations of the Office of the Federal Coordinator (OFC) for Gulf Coast Rebuilding found confusion and disagreements among key recovery stakeholders as well as with the Federal Coordinator himself regarding the office's appropriate scope and function.[3] According to OFC and officials from several State and local governments located on the Gulf Coast, one of the functions of the office was to work to resolve problems and obstacles in the recovery process by directly intervening in program-specific matters such as FEMA's Public Assistance Grant program. However, FEMA believed that such actions were outside the scope of a coordination office, and instead viewed OFC's proper role as being responsible for broad cross-agency concerns, such as alleviating inconsistencies across Federal programs or looking for program gaps. This confusion, accompanied by the lack of clear decision-making authority on the part of OFC, may have ultimately slowed down the resolution of recovery problems in some cases by increasing the number of meetings and the amount of paperwork involved.

In 2010, we reported that misunderstandings about the role of LTCR and its recovery partners working under National Response Framework's Long-term Community Recovery Annex (ESF–14) had an adverse effect on the timing of Federal recovery assistance.[4] For example, Federal, State, and local officials working in Texas in the wake of Hurricane Ike reported that LTCR and ESF–14's involvement ended before critical long-term recovery coordination and planning needs were addressed. Among the reasons cited for this were differing interpretations of FEMA's mission and authorities and varying interpretations of LTCR's mission by Federal Coordinating Officers. A senior FEMA official told us that, based on his experience, Federal Coordinating Officers generally believe that FEMA's long-term recovery mission is primarily to work with the States immediately after a disaster to develop a long-term recovery plan. Under this view, assisting States and local communities with coordinating Federal assistance to implement their recovery plans is not the responsibility of staff working under ESF–14, but rather that of regional staff or other FEMA recovery officials who remain in the disaster area. However, FEMA regional staff sometimes did not take on this role. As a result, in some cases, such as in Texas after Hurricane Ike, State and local officials found that they were left without Federal coordination and planning assistance during a critical period in the recovery process.

An effective way to avoid conflicts and misunderstandings regarding the roles and responsibilities of the many entities involved in the disaster recovery process is to clearly delineate them ahead of time through planning. On the State and local level, we found several examples of jurisdictions that used pre-disaster recovery plans to do this. For example, in 1987, several years before the Northridge Earthquake hit in 1994, the city of Los Angeles created a Recovery and Reconstruction Plan that clearly identified the roles and responsibilities of key officials involved in recovery. Specifically, the plan identified which city departments have responsibility for implementing predetermined activities before and after a disaster in several functional categories, including residential, commercial, industrial rehabilitation, and economic recovery. To be most helpful, such a plan must be more than simply paper instructions, rather it is a dynamic and inclusive process that is brought to life by periodic exercises. Long-term recovery planning exercises held by the city of Los Angeles brought police and fire officials together to engage in role-playing exercises in which they assumed the responsibilities of recovery officials. For example, a public safety officer played the role of a building inspector responsible for issuing building permits after an earthquake. A city official at the time of the earthquake told us that such exercises were an important part of developing relationships among stakeholders and ensuring city staff understood their post-disaster roles and responsibilities. According to a Federally-funded evaluation of this plan, the contacts established during the planning process facilitated recovery after the Northridge Earthquake. Communities in other areas including San Francisco, California, and Palm Beach, Florida, have taken action to develop recovery plans prior to a disaster that identify roles and responsibilities for recovery.

FEMA has taken steps to more clearly define the roles and responsibilities of Federal, State, and non-Governmental partners in the NDRF that was finalized in September 2011. The NDRF explicitly acknowledges that clearly-defined roles and responsibilities form a foundation for unity of effort among all recovery partners to jointly identify opportunities, foster partnerships, and optimize resources. Toward this end, the framework has a section devoted to describing the roles and responsibilities for a range of participants in the recovery process including Federal, State,

[3] GAO–09–411R.
[4] GAO–10–404.

Tribal, and local governments, the private and nonprofit sectors, as well as individuals and households.

The NDRF also created the position of Federal Disaster Recovery Coordinator (FDRC) and established a process for involving this official in coordinating Federal recovery assistance during various phases of recovery to help ensure that State and local needs are met, including extending this assistance beyond the closeout of Federal disaster response activities. Further, the NDRF provides clearer criteria regarding when and how recovery stakeholders become engaged in the process. It identifies the entities that will be involved in the decision-making process as well as the factors or criteria they will consider. In these ways, the NDRF provides the groundwork for addressing challenges identified in our previous work and thus represents a positive step forward, but still requires additional details regarding implementation.

## COORDINATION AND COLLABORATION AMONG STAKEHOLDERS FACILITATES SUCCESSFUL RECOVERY

Recovery from a major disaster is a long, complex process that involves an extensive group of participants both across the Federal Government and at the State and local level. At least 14 Federal departments and agencies are responsible for administering dozens of recovery-related programs, many of which rely heavily on active participation by State and local government for their implementation. Because of this, and the fact that under Federal law, States and localities have the lead in disaster recovery, the capacity of State and local governments to act effectively directly affects how well communities recover after a major disaster. Therefore, effective coordination and collaboration both within the Federal community as well as with State and local partners is critical. Our past work has explored this issue in considerable detail. Today, I would like to briefly focus on three of the ways the Federal Government has sought to improve coordination and collaboration in order to facilitate disaster recovery.

First, the Federal Government has worked to foster coordination by bringing Federal and State stakeholders together collectively and by working one-on-one to identify and resolve recovery challenges. For example, in the wake of the 2008 Midwest floods, FEMA's LTCR branch held biweekly meetings in Iowa with Federal and State agencies, such as the Small Business Administration, the Departments of Housing and Urban Development, Labor, Agriculture, Commerce, and Transportation, and the Environmental Protection Agency; the State counterparts to these agencies; State finance offices; and others.[5] According to officials we spoke with, these meetings provided a forum to identify and leverage Federal and State resources to support disaster recovery, as well as discuss potential coordination challenges such as gaps in funding or other long-term recovery concerns. Similarly, following the 2005 Gulf Coast hurricanes, OFC also worked to coordinate across agencies and with State and local partners, and address conflicts.[6] Toward this end, OFC sponsored "workout sessions" focused on specific recovery topics and invited State and local agencies to address coordination challenges, and developed detailed matrices of the agreements reached, tasks to be performed, and stakeholders responsible for implementation.

Second, in addition to coordination at the Federal level, we have previously reported on the Federal Government's efforts to work with State and local governments to help them take advantage of all available disaster assistance and achieve long-term recovery goals.[7] For example, in the wake of the 2008 Midwest floods, LTCR provided technical assistance to affected communities by conducting or facilitating recovery assessments to identify the long-term effects of the disaster, providing staff to advise the communities on steps to take as they developed recovery plans, creating planning tools that the communities used to guide their planning activities, and hosting workshops to discuss and share recovery-planning lessons, among other things. In addition LTCR helped communities to prioritize their potential long-term recovery projects and identify potential sources of funding.

Third, collaboration between Federal, State, and local recovery partners in jointly administering disaster-assistance programs is also improved by effectively sharing information. For example, in Mississippi after Hurricane Katrina, Federal, State, and local officials adopted strategies that helped to facilitate the sharing of information on specific Public Assistance Grant projects. Following the disaster, FEMA's Mississippi Transitional Recovery Office and the Mississippi Emergency Manage-

[5] GAO–10–404.
[6] GAO–09–411R.
[7] GAO–10–404.

ment Agency were located in the same office complex in Biloxi, Mississippi, and officials from these agencies were also positioned together throughout the State. They reported that this co-location had multiple benefits for information sharing and exchange, including the timely sharing of critical documents and facilitation of daily meetings on project-development issues. In addition to collocating, FEMA and Mississippi State officials used Public Assistance Grant funding to secure an on-line accounting system that made operational documents associated with projects readily available to all parties. As a result, FEMA and the State had immediate access to key documents that helped them to make project-approval decisions, thereby improving collaboration.

Improving coordination and collaboration is one of the key objectives of the NDRF, and the framework contains several strategies to do so. One of these involves the creation of the position of Federal Disaster Recovery Coordinator (FDRC). The FDRC is assigned the responsibility and authority to facilitate the coordination of information and activities among the Federal agencies whose programs, technical assistance, and expertise are relevant to recovery, within the framework of the Recovery Support Strategy. In large-scale disasters and catastrophic incidents, the NDRF also states that the FDRC will take over as the lead from the Federal Coordinating Officer (FCO), when the FCO demobilizes, to continue management of Federal recovery resources, for those incidents that require continued significant interagency disaster-recovery coordination. The NDRF also introduces the concept of recovery coordinators at the State/Tribal and local level that will work with the FDRC to facilitate coordination across levels of government. Along with establishing the position of the FDRC, the NDRF creates six Recovery Support Functions (RSF) to facilitate coordination and collaboration among the many different players involved in recovery. The NDRF also outlines ways to improve collaboration between Federal, State, and local communities in developing recovery plans. The framework states that Federal officials should provide timely, accurate, and accessible information to the public and manage such expectations in coordination with local, State, Tribal, and other stakeholders. However, the NDRF currently does not provide the details for how to do this.

PERIODIC EVALUATION AND REPORTING OF RECOVERY PROGRESS IS KEY

Periodic reporting on organizational activities can help decision makers, clients, and stakeholders obtain feedback for improving both policy and operational effectiveness of recovery efforts. Although "after-action reports" often are a standard feature of response operations, they are less common in the recovery context. The city of Kobe, Japan, and Hyogo prefecture (the larger governmental unit, similar to a county, that covers the city's surrounding region) both provide examples of how evaluation and reporting can be effectively incorporated into community and regional recovery. They established a process through which government officials, community members, and recovery experts worked together to assess the recovery progress and recommend improvements.

Hyogo prefecture and the city of Kobe created a system of periodic assessments of recovery in the wake of their 1995 earthquake. Both governments designed a two-phase approach to evaluating the progress they have made toward recovery, the first taking place about 5 years after the earthquake and the second about 10 years afterward. This design allowed for both a short- and longer-term assessment of the recovery. Although the Hyogo and Kobe governments funded these evaluations, neither prefecture nor city employees were directly involved in conducting these assessments; rather they used external staff to perform the reviews. Hyogo prefecture invited domestic and international disaster-recovery experts to serve on its evaluation panels, while the city of Kobe staffed its reviews with members of local community groups.

These evaluations focused on the goals established in the recovery plans approved by the national government 6 months after the earthquake. They enabled policymakers to measure the progress made by various stakeholders in achieving recovery goals, identify needed changes to existing policies, and learn lessons for future disasters. The panels examined several broad recovery topics—including health, industry, employment, and urban development—which resulted in many recommendations to improve recovery from the Kobe earthquake.

For example, as a result of its 10-year evaluation, Hyogo prefecture gained insight into the unintended consequences of its policies regarding the relocation of victims, an insight that subsequently led to policy revisions. After the earthquake, the prefecture gave priority to the relocation of elderly victims and grouped them together in special-care residences located outside the city. While this policy ensured that this vulnerable population received housing quickly, it also had the unintended effect of isolating the relocated seniors, who were removed from their communities. In fact, the verification committee attributed the untimely deaths of some seniors to this housing arrangement. After learning of this finding, the prefecture built new types of residential housing that offer comprehensive lifestyle support for seniors. In addition, for future disasters the prefecture plans to develop a system to track displaced populations as they move from temporary to permanent housing to help maintain better contact with victims.

While the NDRF does briefly address the issue of measures and metrics, the document emphasizes neither this concept nor the potential value of regular evaluations as the recovery process moves forward.

CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

Disaster recovery can be a long, complex, and expensive process involving a large number of Federal, State, and local parties. This makes it especially important to have clearly-defined roles that are well understood by all participants. Because these parties often depend on each other to accomplish recovery goals, effective coordination and collaboration is essential. Experience shows us that successful collaborative relationships are not built overnight. Such coordination requires building effective relationships among participants before, during, and after a disaster occurs. Since such collaboration often must continue for years, it can be enhanced by periodically looking back to evaluate what worked, what can be improved, and what progress is still needed. Clearly defining roles and responsibilities, effective coordination, and evaluation are critical ingredients in going beyond a recovery framework to a useful implementation plan. While the creation of the NDRF is a significant step, the implementation of this broad framework will be a key to determining its ultimate success.

Chairman Bilirakis, Ranking Member Richardson, and Members of the subcommittee, this concludes my statement. I would be happy to respond to any questions you may have at this time.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Thank you very much. I appreciate it.

I will recognize myself for questions.

The first question is to Administrator Manning. The National Preparedness Report, the NPR, ranked the core capabilities based on a fixed percentage that was formulated by the State Preparedness Report survey data. Interestingly, in the self-assessment surveys completed by the States, respondents were only given the option of selecting one of five provided statements, where each successive statement indicates a higher capability. Why is this the case? Can you please explain how FEMA translated data from the State Preparedness Reports into the overall fixed percentages?

Second, were other factors like the independent evaluations and studies by other Federal agencies used to determine the final rankings? How, if at all, did FEMA verify the data provided by States to determine that it had provided a complete and accurate picture? If FEMA did not verify the data, what plans do you have in the future for future reports to include such validations?

You are recognized.

Mr. MANNING. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The National Preparedness Report included a wide variety of data sources and methodologies in our analysis to its conclusions. The State Preparedness Report data that you reference actually was a very small percentage of the overall data analysis included in the report. Only 13 percent of the capability analysis is based on the State Preparedness Report data. The ranking of the survey results of that data set represents the relative impression that the States have in their activity in that regard.

We did, in fact, validate anomalies in the analysis as we were analyzing the State Preparedness Report data. For example, we looked for statistical anomalies in the responses and in the data sets. One, for example, we identified a State that ranked a volcano hazard as very high in a State that had no volcanoes, as an example. But it turned out, on our further review and deeper analysis of that particular example, that their concern there was the impact from a neighboring State. Another example would be areas where they ranked catastrophic disasters across the board above other concerns. So, in the course of the analysis of the SPR data, we identified a number of places and, on further review, determined that in almost all of those cases they were statistically valid data sets.

Across the rest of the National Preparedness Report, we used over 800 other documents—State, Federal reports and analysis; analyzed over $24 billion worth of Department of Homeland Security and Health and Human Services grant expenditures; quantitative data on what was procured, in what time, for what particular capabilities; and evaluated household survey data that we have been conducting for a number of years that represents over 98 percent of U.S. households.

As we progress into subsequent years of the National Preparedness Report, we continue to evaluate the data sources, identify new sources of capability to be analyzed, gaps in the existing data sets, refine our survey tools. For example, in the State Preparedness Report, the State Preparedness Report was based on—the analysis of State Preparedness Report was based on a time period that predated PPD–8 and the identification of the 31 core capabilities. As we progress with the State Preparedness Report into the future, they are realigned into the core capabilities to give us a stronger ability to link the activities of our partners to those core capabilities against the goal and be able to measure our preparedness to meet that goal.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Thank you.

This question is regarding, Mr. Manning, CMAS. Administrator Manning, the WARN Act required Nation-wide deployment of CMAS, which is the Commercial Mobile Alert System, by April 2012. Yet, according to FEMA, only 24 alert originators have been approved at this point. Despite early deployment in the D.C. area, the D.C. Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency has yet to be approved as an alert originator.

What is the status of the CMAS deployment? What is the process for authorization of alert originators? When will the many alerting authorities awaiting authorization be approved by FEMA?

Mr. MANNING. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CMAS is an important new tool available to the emergency management community to communicate alert and warning to the public. We are very happy to say that we do have seven of the National carriers, including all of the major, big carriers across the country, cellular phone carriers, are participating and have that capability Nation-wide today. We have 18 States that are currently enrolled and active as message originators, an additional 46 cities and counties across the country, and a number that are in the process.

Mr. Chairman, you asked what is involved in becoming an originator and specifically to the District of Columbia. There are steps—basically, the steps that are required to become a message originator boil down to, at the local government level, to having taken the appropriate training to understand what is required, what are the threshold criteria to originate a message and how to go about doing that; the acquisition of the software to be able to promulgate that message, which is a very simple thing; and an MOU with the Department of Homeland Security in order for the technical systems between a State or local government to interface with ours.

We have been working with the District of Columbia on coming into the system. They have met the training, they have met the other criteria. The MOU is awaiting signature with the District office of emergency management, D.C. Emergency Management Agency. We are doing everything in our power to facilitate that on their end.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. But what seems to be the problem, you know, specifically the District of Columbia, but also—you know, there are only 24 alert originators. I mean, what is holding it up? This was supposed to go on-line, you know, according to the WARN Act, in April 2012. What seems to be the problem?

Mr. MANNING. Well, Mr. Chairman, it appears that the delay on the—CMAS is deployed from a technical perspective from FEMA and with our partners in the cellular phone industry, with the seven major carriers. The delay in getting the message originators—it is a voluntary program, so it requires State and local governments to choose to enroll and become message originators.

We can today promulgate a message, a Presidential message. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the National Weather Service has the ability to promulgate warning today—two phones that are enabled over the carriers that are carrying it. The local government——

Mr. BILIRAKIS. I don't mean to interrupt, but, I mean, how many have chosen to enroll? It is a voluntary program. Approximately how many are waiting? You know, if you can give me some specifics on that.

Mr. MANNING. Mr. Chairman, we have 18 States that are currently active that are enrolled that are approved as message originators. An additional 46 cities and counties are approved as message originators. I believe we have another 20 that are in the process of negotiating the MOUs.

We are also actively pursuing, at the very least, all 56 States and territories to become message originators. A State has the ability to promulgate a message to a geographic area within a city or county, whether the city or county has chosen to sign up as a message originator. By focusing our efforts on the States, actively focusing our efforts on getting all 56 States and territories to be message originators, we can cover the American population while we work with the cities and counties.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Thank you very much.

I want to ask Mr. Czerwinski a question, and then I am going to yield to my colleagues here.

Looking over the report, sir, I can see that one of the mission areas the Nation needs to continue to develop and sustain is the recovery mission. In the NPR, most of the recovery-focused core capabilities received a ranking of 62 percent or lower, and that is unacceptable.

What recommendations do you have that will help the Nation continue to develop and sustain recovery capabilities?

Mr. CZERWINSKI. Mr. Chairman, thank you for asking that question because it matches up perfectly with the point that I was making, and that is, in terms of recovery, we are behind where we are in response.

The point that I made in my opening statement is the one that I would reiterate, and that is, we need to come up with the plans that implement the framework, we need to practice them. I cannot express how more important practice is, because that is how things really get learned and done. It is then you have to take a step back and evaluate.

On the response side, we have the concept of after-action studies. That is something that would be very useful on the recovery side, to do those kind of evaluations and then make those changes.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Thank you very much. I appreciate it.

Now I will recognize Mr. Farenthold for 5 minutes, the gentleman from Texas. You are recognized, sir.

Mr. FARENTHOLD. Thank you very much.

Mr. Manning, it is my understanding, at least in broad, general terms, you have the preparedness, the response, and the recovery are kind of the three phases of what we would do.

We have suffered in Texas quite a few disasters, obviously a hurricane-prone area. Knock on wood, we have dodged anything serious in recent years. But we recently had the fires in Bastrop County. There were some issues during the second—obviously, you know, I am not sure how involved FEMA with preparing for those. But the early response, we hit a couple of bumps. Now, from what I am hearing from the people in the area, FEMA is starting to pull out before the recovery is completely finished.

How far is FEMA set to go on recovery? I mean, where do you say, "All right, we are done, it is time to leave"?

Mr. MANNING. Thank you.

Under the National Disaster Recovery Framework that we promulgated last year, it changes the way we approach recovery. We look at recovery as the economic viability of a community; the community is back functioning and back healthy. In the case of the Bastrop fires, I will look into that when I return back to the office, and the progress that is being made there.

But, generally, in recovery, we have—we break our recovery activities into two areas. We have public assistance, where we assist the local governments in rebuilding the infrastructure, and then our individual assistance, where we work with individuals and families.

The NDRF takes a new approach at working with families. We prefer to do this as a whole community, with case management and ensuring that we work and follow through as individuals that are trying to recover from the effects of disasters. We work in support of the States and the Governors. We don't close our disasters or leave a community until we all, with the Governor, feel that we have reached that point.

Mr. FARENTHOLD. If you have somebody that could visit with my office at some point in the future and follow up with me on where we are with that, because some of the community leaders, I am hearing, are not entirely—let's go to preparedness for a second.

One of the things that is facing us in Texas is, you all are redoing flood maps for the Federal flood insurance. It has substantial impact both on the Government and in the private sector that is going down there. Is anything being—I assume the technology has improved for the mapping, and that is one of the reasons we are doing it. If there are others, I would like to know about them.

Does FEMA have any program or help available to local governments that are adversely affected by that or some of the remediation efforts that they have to do to come into compliance with some of the new regulations? Or do these maps just result in some sort of unfunded mandate for local governments?

Mr. MANNING. No, sir. We certainly do have the ability and do, in many circumstances, work to alleviate or find any problems that may have arisen.

You are absolutely right, the map modernization project, Risk MAP, is a reflection of new technology, new ability to have much greater detail in our maps and a better understanding of our flood insurance rate maps of where areas are at risk. I would be very happy to point our Flood Insurance and Mitigation division personnel to work with your office to find who in your community needs assistance and put them in touch with our people and, of course, in FEMA Region 6 in Texas.

Mr. FARENTHOLD. All right. Then I will yield back the remainder of my time.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Thank you, sir.

I now recognize the gentleman from Pennsylvania, Mr. Marino. You are recognized for 5 minutes.

I am sorry, I thought it was Mr. Marino. You look a little like him. Okay, Mr. Turner. I am sorry. You are recognized.

Mr. TURNER. Thank you. I just got 20 years back.

With the changes to the threat levels against the United States, the need for first responders to receive vital intelligence information has become a critical component in the Nation's ability to prevent and protect against, mitigate the effects of, and respond to and recover from terrorist attacks and disasters.

I believe that, within the National Preparedness System, the intelligence- and information-sharing core capability needs to be integrated into all the mission areas and frameworks. I am particularly concerned with the high-rises in New York City, the HAZMAT groups and special rescue units within the FDNY.

What is FEMA doing to ensure that these first responders, particularly in these high-risk areas, are receiving the timely and necessary information across all the mission areas?

Mr. MANNING. Thank you. That is an extremely important topic.

We have been very happy over the years to be able to support our partners through the development of the network of fusion centers that have been built up across the country in our State and urban areas. Some of our colleagues here today and on the next panel will talk about that, as well.

We have a large percentage of the investment that we have made over the past 10 years in our Homeland Security Grant Programs have gone to support intelligence and information sharing, specifically in the fusion centers but also across information sharing, the technology and the planning, to integrate across the traditionally bifurcated response emergency management community and the prevention and protection community of law enforcement and the intelligence community.

You mentioned the core capabilities. In the National Preparedness Goal, under Presidential Directive 8, for the first time we have a synchronized linking of our capabilities, of all 31 core capabilities. We do categorize them as prevention, protection, response, recovery, and mitigation as a way to develop frameworks around the sharing across those, but having them linked into one National preparedness system. So the activities in information sharing, information and intelligence sharing, and all of the prevention and protection activities are seamlessly linked through the National Preparedness System with the activities in response and recovery of our emergency management community, the traditional fire services, the public works agencies that have not always been part of that law enforcement community on information sharing.

I think we have made great strides in those regards. There are great examples in the New York metropolitan area in recent years. I think we see through the example this week of the National Level Exercise 12, NLE 12, part of the National Preparedness System is the National Exercise Program, along with our National Training and Education System, along with building our core capabilities through the National Incident Management System to be able to protect the public. The exercise system, the exercise program is how we evaluate our plans, how we evaluate how well we have planned and how well we work together.

This year we are doing a cybersecurity exercise, when we were working across State and Federal governments to share information and intelligence on the potential nation-state and terrorist actors that are attacking the United States and synchronizing that through the response community that is preparing for and responding to the physical manifestation of these cyber attacks in this exercise. I think that is a good example of where we are pulling those threats together.

Mr. TURNER. All right.

In the days and weeks following 9/11, NYPD was working heroically downtown in a very hazardous environment. There were things that were known by some branches of Government that seemed not to be known by others. How would that be addressed today?

Mr. MANNING. Specifically in referring to the coordination of information in a response on the streets, we have a vastly different structure of organizing how we do both the policy and information coordination at the Federal Government level and across the country since 2001.

Information sharing across Federal agencies is dramatically better than it was in 2001 through the advent of our National security staff, a change from looking holistically at National security and homeland security issues; the National Counterterrorism Center and the work of I&A, Intelligence and Analysis, at Department of Homeland Security, being able to pull information from the intelligence community and provide it right to State and local law enforcement; things like the ITAG, the threat advisory group, that is made up of State and local law enforcement officers, in some case fire service officers, working at the National Counterterrorism Center. There is an ability to share information that didn't exist in 2001.

Additionally, on-the-street coordination. One of the things we identified in the responses to the 9/11 attacks as needing critical attention was operational coordination—how we worked together, how multiple governments worked together, cities and States from around the country, and how law enforcement and the fire service and public works and the public health community, how do we coordinate?

So President Bush issued Homeland Security Presidential Directive 5, which established the National Incident Management System, then passed by Congress in the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act. We now have—all the States and local governments in the country have reported compliant with the National Incident Management System. We now have one National system for coordinating multi-jurisdiction, multi-governmental levels of response on the street. We didn't have that in 2001. We have it today, and we have the entire country that has had that training.

Mr. TURNER. Thank you.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Thank you, sir. I apologize for calling you Mr. Marino, but he is a good guy. I have some vision problems.

Mr. TURNER. I am flattered.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. So I apologize.

Okay. Before I dismiss the first panel, I want to ask one question of Mr. Manning.

To what do you attribute the lag of cyber capabilities on the State level, as reported in the State Preparedness Report?

Mr. MANNING. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I think an important first thing to keep in mind is that the National Preparedness Report—this National Preparedness Report covers an analysis of the time period between 2001 and 2010. We have learned a great deal just in the past 18 months and made great strides.

So cybersecurity we see as a low level of response on the part of the States. Over a time period where it was emerging as a homeland security threat, it was an area where many people were identifying emerging threats, both nation-state and nongovernmental actors, but unsure of how to focus an effort on building capability. This is something we have made great strides on just in the last 18 months. I mentioned the National Level Exercise this week. We also have things like the National Cyber Incident Response Plan, the NCIC, the center for coordinating that response. I think we have seen an uptick just in the last year of activity on the part of the State and local governments in preparing for cyber attacks.

Another important thing is the purpose of the National Preparedness Report is to identify the areas we are strong in but also to identify areas that we need more focused attention. So I think identifying areas such as cybersecurity as an activity, as a homeland security activity of State and local governments that needs attention is a success of the report. It draws attention to the fact we need to do more, and we are already seeing more in that. It be-comes a priority for us going forward in how we identify the threats and hazards for which we have to prepare.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. I would like to continue to track that, so I would like to get with you on that and get some more details on the progress we are making on the State level.

Thank you very much. I thank the panel for their testimony. Of course, I thank the Members for their questions.

I want to dismiss you and move on to the second panel. Thank you very much again.

I would like to welcome the second panel.

Our first witness is Mr. John Madden. Mr. Madden is the director of the Alaska Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services—welcome, sir—a position to which he was appointed in January 2007. Mr. Madden has served in the U.S. Army and as a civilian in many Federal departments and agencies, including the Navy, National Weather Service, Federal Aviation Administration, and the Transportation Security Administration. Mr. Madden currently serves as the vice president of the National Emergency Management Association.

Welcome, sir.

Following Mr. Madden, we will receive testimony from Mr. Mike Sena. Mr. Sena is the deputy director of the Northern California Regional Intelligence Center and serves as president of the National Fusion Center Association. He has served in law enforcement for nearly 20 years, including with the California Bureau of Investigation and Intelligence, the California Bureau of Narcotics Enforcement, and the California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control. Mr. Sena received his bachelor of arts in criminal justice from California State University—San Bernardino.

Finally, we will receive testimony from Dr. Georges Benjamin. I am sure that is probably not the way to pronounce "Georges," but anyway. Dr. Benjamin is the executive director of the American Public Health Association, a position he has held since December 2002. Prior to this position, he served as a secretary of the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. Dr. Benjamin is a graduate of the Illinois Institute of Technology and the University of Illinois College of Medicine.

Welcome, all the witnesses. We look forward to your testimony. Your entire written statements will appear in the record, and I ask that you summarize your testimony for 5 minutes.

Again, we are expecting votes in about 20 minutes or so, so I think we can probably wrap this up. But, you know, I want to make sure that we hear all your testimony and we ask as many questions as possible. But I appreciate you being here today.

We will go ahead and begin with Mr. Madden. You are recognized for 5 minutes, sir.

**STATEMENT OF JOHN W. MADDEN, DIRECTOR, ALASKA DIVISION OF HOMELAND SECURITY AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT, ON BEHALF OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION**

Mr. MADDEN. Chairman Bilirakis and Members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today on behalf of the National Emergency Management Association. NEMA represents the

State emergency management directors in all 50 States, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. territories.

Emergency management and homeland security officials have long been challenged on how best to measure the effectiveness of our preparedness efforts. Are we doing the right thing for the right outcome? Do our efforts before the disaster improve our actions during and after the disaster?

Much as the Department of Defense once planned and trained for the last war, until the last decade we prepared for the last disaster. But we learned there is great uncertainty on how, when, and where disasters strike and with what motivations and sophistication criminals and terrorists plan, practice, and conduct their attacks.

We find ourselves today in the midst of a much-needed transformation—a transformation of preparedness from a reaction to a discipline, but not a discipline that is rigid and bureaucratic, rather a discipline that enables us to turn swiftly to a new adversary, to recognize an evolving hazard and recognize an increasing risk, and to confront a new emerging threat.

We consider the first National Preparedness Report a very good start. It is well-written, well-documented, but it is still transitional. There is no solid linkage yet between the analysis of threats and hazards at the State and local level and the broad assessment of preparedness across the Nation. This must be our foremost emphasis in future reports.

Before we will achieve a truly useful National Preparedness Report, we need a completely integrated system of analysis and problem solving, a system for sharing innovations and lessons learned between all of our stakeholders, a system that fosters partnerships and does not create undue competition with winners and losers. We need to identify and address vulnerabilities that exist beyond the ability of a city or of a State to resolve. We must document how our systems work and what can go wrong; identify potential consequences and what capabilities we need to prevent, protect, mitigate, respond, and recover; and, finally, how best to prioritize our actions and our resources to close the most critical gaps.

Our focus must be on our ability to prepare for and respond to events of extreme complexity based on size, duration, consequences, or concurrent or remote events. FEMA's approach of the maximum of maximums is an interesting thought experiment, but why limit ourselves to an assumption of sheltering 100,000 for 30 days? Why not 200,000 for 60 days, in winter, during a pandemic? The National Preparedness Report should lend insight in setting priorities and investing in capabilities that draw down the risks to the Nation and its vital interests.

Earlier this year, NEMA released the proposal for a comprehensive preparedness grant structure in which we stated our fundamental principles and values of the States. One is very relevant to this discussion on the National Preparedness Report: Build and sustain a skilled cadre across the Nation that is well-organized, rigorously trained, vigorously exercised, properly equipped, prepared for all hazards, focused on core capabilities, and resourced for both the most serious and the most likely threats and hazards.

Mr. Chairman, these are the hallmarks of a prepared Nation, and these are what we should be measuring.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

[The statement of Mr. Madden follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JOHN W. MADDEN

JUNE 6, 2012

INTRODUCTION

Chairman Bilirakis, Representative Richardson, and distinguished Members of the subcommittee; thank you for the opportunity to present testimony today on behalf of the National Emergency Management Association (NEMA). NEMA represents the State emergency management directors of all 50 States, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. Territories.

One of the most significant challenges facing State and local emergency management and homeland security officials is assessing the effectiveness of preparedness. Are we doing the right things for the right outcome? Do our efforts before the disaster improve our actions during and after the disaster? Such measurement remains elusive due to the ever-changing nature of preparedness itself.

Congress and various administrations have instituted several programs to address preparedness. For example, the Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG) has built a strong State and local baseline capability of emergency management in this Nation. The State Homeland Security Grant Program has enabled significant investment in equipment and capabilities.

We truly are a more prepared Nation. From neighborhood communities through all levels of government, we have acquired resources, achieved collaboration, and built systems to mitigate, prevent, prepare for, and respond to natural hazards and terrorist threats.

Today, I will examine the evolution of preparedness in this Nation, the engagement by State officials in this process, and the future direction of preparedness.

THE EVOLUTION OF PREPAREDNESS IN THIS NATION

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) released the National Preparedness Report earlier this year. The document was intended to be one of many reports to assess capabilities and help the Nation set priorities in coming years. To fully understand the origins of the report, we must first review several seminal events that drove changes on how this country approaches preparedness from a Federal, State, and local perspective.

Until the last decade, most preparedness efforts by the Nation were backward-facing. In other words, we prepared for the events and disasters of the past. We focused on improving our response to the last disaster. Unfortunately, neither nature nor humans are so cooperative as to follow this strategy. The repeated lesson learned is great uncertainty in how, when, and where disasters strike and with what sophistication criminals and terrorists plan, practice, and conduct their attacks.

After the tragic events of September 11, 2001, it became a National priority to create and sustain the ability of State and local governments to prevent and respond to a broad range of severe homeland security events. Much like the events of 60 years earlier at Pearl Harbor, September 11 identified gaps in our approach to awareness of what is going on and how we prepared for future disasters or attacks. September 11 also challenged all our assumptions about preparedness. The focus of many new Federal programs was to avoid another surprise by building the necessary capabilities to prevent incidents when possible and respond appropriately when the next event occurs.

The terrorist attacks of 2001 and anthrax attacks later the same year brought "Homeland Security" from theory into practice. It also forced the reexamination of preparedness. The Nation began a transformation in our approach to preparedness—from reaction to discipline. Our goal was not a discipline which is rigid and bureaucratic; but rather a discipline enabling us to turn swiftly to a new adversary, recognize an evolving hazard, and confront an emerging threat. Two years later, then President Bush issued Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD) 8; National Preparedness. This document strengthened preparedness by articulating a clear and definable goal, and established mechanisms to improve preparedness and strengthen capabilities. Unfortunately, HSPD–8 overlooked one key aspect of preparedness—the natural disaster.

In 2005, Hurricane Katrina ravaged the Gulf Coast and demonstrated a clear lack of preparedness for a catastrophic event at practically every level of government. In the aftermath of the storm, Congress passed the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act (PKEMRA). Among its many elements, this legislation required States to submit an annual State Preparedness Report to FEMA. The most recent report submission occurred at the end of last year.

Finally, last year the President signed Presidential Policy Directive (PPD) 8: National Preparedness, which replaced HSPD–8. PPD–8 called for several new elements, including a National Preparedness Goal and a National Preparedness Report. This report, published on March 30, 2012, was partially built by integrating data from the State Preparedness Reports. PPD–8 has not yet been fully implemented or institutionalized. The supporting frameworks are still being refined and must be integrated with each other and within the entire preparedness system.

CONNECTION BETWEEN THE NATIONAL AND THE STATE REPORTS

We consider the initial National Preparedness Report as transitional. There is no solid linkage yet between the analysis of threats and hazards at the State and local level and the broad assessment of preparedness across the entire Nation. In assessing preparedness, we must not start at the end but at the beginning. The key element for successful integration is the threat, hazard identification, and risk assessment or "THIRA." This tool has potential for being the analytical foundation for understanding and setting priorities. The THIRA should be the means by which we document how the system operates, what can go wrong, a means to identify potential consequences, and how best to address gaps. By their very nature, all threats and hazards are variable. There is no single descriptor of hurricane or of an improvised explosive device. The THIRA enables a problem-solving approach to preparedness. For example, a county with a variable flood hazard may partner with a neighboring county to meet its sheltering needs for a local flood. But if the partner county faces the same hazard, shelters may remain unavailable for use requiring a broader, regional, or State solution.

Preparedness is about priorities. There is an old saying that a ship in harbor is safe but does not represent why we build ships. This Nation must seek and achieve the balance of actions toward preparedness to enhance our economy and not create burdens. The removal of such encumbrances will enable the continued movement of goods and people without undue restrictions and ensure the continued provision of essential services under all conditions.

Our examination of preparedness must not be abstract, but rather form the basis for action. FEMA should improve these reports to enable a greater return on investment to the States and the local governments. The value should be placed on local decision-making as much as on National assessment. First, States must fully integrate Core Capabilities into their planning, analysis, and organizations. Even though FEMA did not require States to address all the Core Capabilities in the latest report the States seek to integrate them thoughtfully and systematically.

According to a July 2011 report completed by NEMA, "In fiscal year 2010, States addressed anywhere from one to 25 of these National priorities for each investment. The capabilities most often addressed included Planning, Communications, Community Preparedness and Participation, Critical Infrastructure Protection, and On-Site Incident Management. Whether a small or large expenditure, or a project impacting multiple or just a few capabilities, each of the National Capabilities found representation in at least one justification throughout the country."

FEMA should increase its collaboration on the implementation of the National Preparedness System. Within the States stand countless examples of innovation in methods, approaches, and products. Considerable sharing of these innovations can be found across the States. The emphasis should be on achieving the ability to prepare for and respond to events of extreme complexity based either on size, duration, consequences, or concurrent or remote events. FEMA's approach of the "maximum of maximums" is an interesting thought experiment; however, every claimed maximum can be surpassed and is by definition a compromise.

The National Preparedness Report should be based on realistic analysis valuing qualitative as well as quantitative values. The knowledge base of threats and hazards, levels of preparedness, and how to address gaps is best identified by including the broadest possible stakeholder base. But the Nation is not well served by any reductionist analysis based on a "GREEN, YELLOW, RED" coding or by assigning a value of "one through five" when attempting to manage highly complex and interrelated issues.

Overall, States agree with some of the findings of the National Preparedness Report. For example, Federal preparedness assistance grants have certainly helped build and enhance State, local, Tribal, and territorial capabilities throughout multi-year investment. The entire systems could be improved, however, if the existing disjointed preparedness system could be revamped.

MOVING PREPAREDNESS FORWARD

Besides these specific suggestions, overall preparedness in this Nation can be greatly enhanced by systemic changes in how the Federal Government supports preparedness functions at the State and local levels. Earlier this year, NEMA released the *Proposal for a Comprehensive Preparedness Grants Structure.* This proposal looks at preparedness grant funding holistically and brings State, local, and National priorities into alignment with one another.

The current grants structure is complex and often contradictory. This creates unintended inefficiencies in investments and duplication of efforts. The current and continuing fiscal condition of our Nation requires us to invest every dollar more wisely than ever before. We want to gain efficiencies in our grants in order to increase the effectiveness of our mission. Within a grants system based on "flexibility with accountability," the States, local governments, and the disciplines charged with our safety and security are capable of insight leading to ideas, innovation guiding investment, and a system of sharing which ensures we improve both our efficiency and effectiveness.

We must integrate our efforts to improve agility in confronting threats to the homeland, whether they are natural, technological, or man-made. This Nation must effectively build strengths and capabilities against a range of threats, reduce the consequences of many hazards, and thus reduce the risks to our communities.

From the purchase of basic equipment to such citizen involvement campaigns as "See Something, Say Something," and from procuring major communications systems to improving the way State and local governments share information, these programs have continued a National effort toward better safeguarding and securing our communities. State and local governments use these essential programs to support our neighborhoods across a range of Government programs, faith-based initiatives, regional collaborations, and personal preparedness efforts.

The Department of Homeland Security does not stand alone in this effort. Many other Federal agencies also oversee hundreds of preparedness programs, from the Department of Health and Human Services to the Department of Education. All programs provide a level of confidence in the "system" so when a major event does occur the citizens of this country remain confident the whole of Government and community has the skills, resources, and knowledge to effectively save lives and protect property.

In these tough economic times, the Federal Government does not bear the burden of securing our homeland alone. Billions of State and local funds are also invested in homeland security activities. Even citizens all across America—some barely able to afford the expense—supply themselves with preparedness kits to contribute to this truly National effort.

MITIGATION AS A FUNCTION OF PREPAREDNESS

Emergency management organizations at the Federal and State levels often are structured more for execution than for planning. We separate the major functions of the profession such as preparedness, protection, mitigation, response, and recovery into easily managed directorates; however, an increasing reliance on the overlap occurs between them naturally. While preparedness and mitigation activities can differ in their mission and execution, the natural similarities provide the emergency management community with opportunities to leverage resources and expertise.

Mr. David Miller, Associate Administrator of the Federal Insurance and Mitigation Administration (FIMA) at FEMA is often quoted as saying, "Mitigation is the thread that permeates the fabric of National preparedness." This sentiment is echoed in the working draft of the National Mitigation Framework. Since FEMA and its partners began the process of developing frameworks under PPD–8, it has become very clear that mitigation cannot exist in a vacuum. Mitigation benefits from the whole community approach to disaster preparedness and supports the other four mission areas of PPD–8. Frameworks and preparedness goals cannot be truly representative or actionable if they promulgate stovepipes. The proliferation of preparedness must be achieved by embracing the unique elements of each mission while understanding and building off of their shared goal of resiliency and sustainability.

While the Federal programs geared towards mitigation are crucial to the success of many activities around the country, many States have committed millions of dollars to building their own mitigation capabilities and leveraging limited resources to accomplish independent preparedness goals. NEMA has always supported mitigation and its critical role in the cycle of preparedness and continues to encourage investments in mitigation activities at the State level.

Resilient communities are those that take proactive measures to protect investments made across the full range of infrastructure. Many of the messages of preparedness are geared towards dealing with or managing the effects of disasters, but mitigation takes preparedness a step further. The actions taken under the name of mitigation reduce the impact of the disaster before it happens and can be used to rebuild an affected area in a more resilient manner. While neither community members nor emergency managers can stop the next disaster from occurring, every member of the community can play an active role in lessening the consequences from those disasters in the future.

CONCLUSION

The States believe the often-mentioned need to "measure preparedness" is being realized all across the country. The commitment made by Congress, State and local governments, and Main Street Americans continues each day amidst constantly-evolving threats and hazards . . . certainly a measured change from the mindset of September 10, 2001.

The National Preparedness System must take the longer view and not the bureaucratic lowest common denominator where the only issue addressed is the one currently under consideration. Our view must be extended from being focused on the current budget or the latest grant cycle to the distant horizon. The National Preparedness Report should contribute to an understanding of what we need to accomplish. Such a document, however, is not the final word or sole measure of our efforts.

Preparedness is an objective rather than a destination. A condition of perfect preparedness cannot be achieved but this should not deter us from our mission to try. No single report will complete this critical mission. The National Preparedness System holds the potential of drawing down risks to the Nation and its vital interests. Accomplishing such reductions in risk is the true business of the homeland security and emergency management enterprise of our Nation.

In our *Proposal for a Comprehensive Preparedness Grants Structure,* NEMA stated our fundamental principles and values. One is very relevant to this discussion on the National Preparedness Report. "Build and sustain a skilled cadre across the Nation that is well organized, rigorously trained, vigorously exercised, properly equipped, prepared for all hazards focused on core capabilities, and resources for both the most serious and most likely threats and hazards."

These are the hallmarks of a prepared Nation. These are what we should measure.

Again, I thank you for the opportunity to testify today and look forward to your questions.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Thank you very much.

Mr. Sena, you are recognized for 5 minutes.

**STATEMENT OF MIKE SENA, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, NORTHERN CALIFORNIA REGIONAL INTELLIGENCE CENTER, ON BEHALF OF THE NATIONAL FUSION CENTER ASSOCIATION**

Mr. SENA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Members of the committee. On behalf of the National Fusion Center Association, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to share our views on the National preparedness.

The NFCA represents the 77 State and major urban area fusion centers that comprise the National network of fusion centers, including the Northern California Regional Intelligence Center, where I serve as the deputy director on detail from the California Department of Justice Bureau of Investigation.

We think the National Preparedness Report can be a helpful assessment of where we stand, but we discovered that the National network of fusion centers was not consulted during the development of the NPR. As a pillar of our National preparedness, we recommend that FEMA, in coordination with DHS I&A, consult directly with the National network of fusion centers in the development of any future reports.

With that said, we fully agree with the report's key findings that a network of State and major urban area fusion centers and JTTFs has significantly improved analytical and information-sharing capabilities among law enforcement, homeland security, and intelligence community entities at all levels of government.

Let me give you an example of what this looks like on the ground. My fusion center is collocated with the FBI JTTF Threat Squad and the Northern California HIDTA. Our analysts have the ability to sit shoulder-to-shoulder with DHS intelligence officers, FBI, Federal, State, and local analysts. We have emergency managers, firefighters, EMS and public health workers, cops, and private-sector representatives working together. Subject to strict privacy guidelines, we analyze suspicious activity reporting from the public and California's network of 40,000 trained terrorism liaison officers. We share timely information with the FBI, DHS, State, and local entities on terrorism and criminal threats to our region. This is deep collaboration, and it did not exist before the National network of fusion centers was created.

But we realize that there is still a lot of work to do. I outlined several on-going challenges in my written statement, but let me mention a few of them.

We need to harmonize the platforms for secure messaging and collaboration across the National network and our Federal partners. We need to continue broadening and deepening fusion center relationships with all relevant stakeholders, and that includes our States, Governors, our HSAs, our UASI coordinators, our emergency managers, and critical infrastructure owners and operators. Fusion center analysts need equal access to classified systems, specifically FBI systems, to ensure top-quality threat analysis. Cleared fusion center personnel should have the same access as DHS, I&A, and FBI personnel to classified systems.

On the issue of investment, earlier this year the NFCA conducted an analysis of fusion center budgets, which revealed that more than 60 percent of all fusion center funding is provided by State and local governments. Less than 40 percent is supported by Federal grants. At the Florida fusion center, for example, 10 percent is Federal funding and 90 percent is State and local. Homeland security intelligence and information sharing is a shared responsibility, and our analysis clearly shows that there is a shared sacrifice and a deep commitment at the State and local levels.

We have real concerns about the impact of DHS grant cuts. Fusion centers in some States will lose analytical personnel beginning this year. Some may cease operating as fusion centers altogether. If these scenarios play out or if the budget sequestration takes effect next year and nondefense discretionary programs like preparedness grants are cut even more, we will lose terrorism prevention capabilities. There is no doubt our National preparedness will suffer from this, and Congress should not let that happen.

Let me close with an example that demonstrates our increased preparedness. During riots in the city of Oakland, the California Highway Patrol received a 9–1–1 call from a citizen concerned about a posting they saw on a popular social networking site. The posting indicated that person was headed to the riot location with handguns and malicious intent. The Highway Patrol immediate relayed the information to the State Threat Assessment Center, our STAC, which is California's designated primary fusion center. The STAC located the web posting, which included photographs of the subject with firearms. Analysts at the STAC ran initial database checks on the subject and quickly notified my fusion center, the NCRIC, on the potential threat.

The NCRIC had personnel working at the Oakland Emergency Operations Center to facilitate information sharing and intelligence support during the riots. NCRIC personnel conducted further analysis of the subject and disseminated an officer safety bulletin to 8,000 fusion center partners in the region. More than 1,000 on-scene law enforcement officers from multiple jurisdictions were receiving real-time information on the potential threat. All that happened within hours.

Days later, the matter was resolved when, thanks to the NCRIC alert, a trained terrorism liaison officer identified the subject, who happened to be an employee of a secure facility.

Key elements of National preparedness allowed this rapid sharing of actionable information to happen: Citizen reporting of suspicious activity, advanced analytical capabilities at the fusion center, the network of trained TLOs, and real-time collaboration among public safety partners.

Mr. Chairman, our level of preparedness has increased dramatically in recent years, and we ask for your continued support as we work to enhance it even further. On behalf of the NFCA, thank you again for this opportunity, and I look forward to your questions.

[The statement of Mr. Sena follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MIKE SENA

JUNE 6, 2012

Chairman Bilirakis, Ranking Member Richardson, Members of the subcommittee, on behalf of the National Fusion Center Association (NFCA), thank you for inviting me to testify today. My name is Mike Sena and I serve as deputy director of the Northern California Regional Intelligence Center (NCRIC), the fusion center for the San Francisco Bay area. I currently serve as president of the National Fusion Center Association (NFCA). The NFCA represents the 77 State and local owned and operated fusion centers that comprise the National Network of Fusion Centers.

It is clear to those of us on the front lines that the state of National preparedness with regard to intelligence and information sharing has improved dramatically since 9/11, with a noticeable acceleration in improvements over the past few years. At the same time, we recognize that a range of capabilities must be further developed, and we are working with our Federal, State, local, and Tribal partners through a variety of forums to integrate the whole community and improve our state of preparedness every day.

As the National Preparedness Report (NPR) states, "fusion centers are focal points within the State and local environment for the receipt, analysis, gathering, and sharing of threat-related information between Federal, State, and local governments and private-sector partners. Fusion centers position law enforcement, public safety, emergency management, fire service, public health, critical infrastructure protection, and private sector security personnel to understand local implications of National intelligence."

In other words, fusion centers analyze National threat information in a local context, disseminate relevant and actionable information to State and local decision makers, and pass critical State and local information up to Federal partners in the intelligence community. All of this is done while protecting the privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties of American citizens.

A snapshot of my own fusion center, the NCRIC, gives you a sense of how we can collaborate today on intelligence and information sharing. We are collocated with the Northern California HIDTA and the FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF) Threat Squad. Our analysts have the ability to sit shoulder-to-shoulder with FBI analysts. We have emergency managers, firefighters, EMS workers, public health workers, cops, analysts, Federal, State, local, and private-sector representatives working at our fusion center. We analyze suspicious activity reporting and share information on terror, crime, and other threats to our region, and we make sure that the right organizations and decision makers get the information they need.

The National Network of Fusion Centers—which includes 49 centers designated by State Governors as primary fusion centers, two territorial fusion centers, and 26 major urban area fusion centers—is maturing at an increasing pace. The overall level of information sharing and intelligence analysis Nation-wide has increased as well. We fully agree with the NPR's key finding that "A network of State and major urban area fusion centers and JTTFs [FBI Joint Terrorism Task Forces] has significantly improved analytical and information-sharing capabilities among law enforcement, homeland security, and intelligence community entities at all levels of government." At the same time, we think it is helpful to review the progress we have made and address the primary on-going challenges we are working with our partners to solve.

The National Network of Fusion Centers has played a major role in transforming the way Federal, State, local, and Tribal governments share intelligence information to protect the homeland. The National Network—together with the full complement of Federal partners—embodies what the 9/11 Commission and the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004 envisioned a decentralized, distributed information sharing model to help "connect the dots" and prevent attacks. In fact, the National Network has become the central information-sharing point between the Federal Government and State, local, Tribal, territorial, and private-sector partners. The 2010 National Security Strategy of the United States specifically cites fusion centers a central element in preventing future acts of terrorism.

After investing $40 billion in Federal preparedness grants over the past decade—the lion's share of which has been directed at response and recovery activities—it is safe to say we are much better prepared to prevent, respond to, and recover from terror attacks and other disasters than we were prior to 9/11.

There is good reason to pat ourselves on the back; but there is much to do, and there is also real reason for concern. As the dramatic declines in Federal grant funds that have been approved by Congress—more than 50% for SHSP and UASI—begin to take effect at the end-user level this year, we will struggle to maintain the momentum that has developed over the past decade. Fusion centers in some States that rely heavily on Federal grant dollars to support operations will likely lose significant numbers of analytical personnel, and some may cease operating as fusion centers altogether. Other centers may turn their focus "inward" to become intelligence support functions within State or local law enforcement agencies. We were happy to see last month that both the House and Senate DHS appropriators recommended increases in funding for State and Local Programs at FEMA. But if these scenarios I just mentioned become reality, there is no doubt that our National preparedness would suffer greatly.

That is why we think that DHS preparedness grants going forward should emphasize the intelligence and information-sharing element of our National preparedness. This must be prioritized to continue building and sustaining prevention and protection capabilities. That includes the sustainment of a strong National Network of Fusion Centers. Fusion centers are focused on prevention, but a growing number of fusion centers support the full range of preparedness activities and partner with the emergency management, fire, and public health communities as well as the private sector.

The NFCA fears the consequences of the impending budget sequestration. Non-defense discretionary funding has been cut substantially over the last 3 years. It is shocking to us that the some of the hardest-hit programs have been those that support homeland security preparedness. FEMA State and Local Programs have been cut by 50% over the last 3 years. We understand the desire to avoid cuts to Defense spending under sequestration, but after the 50% cuts we have sustained, we strongly urge Congress to avoid saddling NDD programs—especially preparedness grants—with even deeper cuts. Security is Government's No. 1 responsibility at all levels, and that means Congress must take a balanced approach to deficit reduction and not hit State and Local Preparedness and other non-defense discretionary programs with further cuts.

No more effective mechanism exists to coordinate the sharing of multi-source information for diverse stakeholders and facilitate broad collaboration on threat analysis. Consider the difficulties if the Federal Government had to share information directly with the 18,000 separate law enforcement agencies in the United States. Or, consider if the Federal Government could only obtain value-added information from State and local agencies on a piecemeal basis to support terrorism investigations. Relative to the tens of thousands of public safety agencies across the county, the National Network of only 77 centers is a very efficient way to leverage the capabilities of an entire Nation to support the analysis and sharing of threat information.

One common misperception that must be corrected is that fusion centers duplicate other joint law enforcement and counterterrorism efforts. That is not the case; they do not duplicate, they objectively add what others cannot add—complementing with vital granular data and analysis the information that others possess—to allow timely action against identified threats. FBI Joint Terrorism Task Forces (JTTFs) play the lead role in counterterrorism investigations. Owned and operated by the FBI with close cooperation and participation by State and local partners, JTTFs are key "customers" of fusion center analytical products.

The National Network of Fusion Centers supports the dissemination of information from JTTFs to the broader public safety community. JTTFs deal primarily with terrorism and other criminal matters related to various aspects of the counterterrorism mission. Fusion centers generally take an all-crimes approach and deal with criminal, terrorism, and other public safety matters across multiple disciplines. JTTFs primarily conduct terrorism investigations and share intelligence with law enforcement and homeland security agencies as appropriate.

By contrast, fusion centers analyze and assess local implications of National threat information and produce actionable intelligence for dissemination to public safety stakeholders in their area of responsibility and beyond. In short, fusion centers do not duplicate the functions of JTTFs, and JTTFs are not organized to achieve the missions of fusion centers. The two programs both have complementary and critical missions. Both are essential to effective homeland security information sharing and investigations. Congress must ensure that both efforts are fully supported if the outcome sought is seamless, well-informed, effective protection of this Nation.

Most fusion centers today have an "all-crimes" mission—and many also now have an "all-hazards" mission—because an exclusive focus on terrorism simply misses the point that you cannot separate crime and terrorism. In addition, the analytical and sharing capabilities that fusion centers offer are useful in every-day crime-fighting efforts. Identifying trends and anomalies, analyzing suspicious activity reporting, and providing actionable information to decision makers is just as essential in fighting gangs, home invasions, human trafficking, and on-line child exploitation as in preventing terrorist attacks. In short, the "fusion process" is valuable in protecting all communities against all threats.

Most law enforcement officers will tell you that the best intelligence collaboration and information sharing happens when relationships among agencies and individuals are built on trust and experience. The right policies, technology, processes, protocols, and funding are essential enablers of effective information sharing, and we've seen dramatic improvements in these areas since 9/11. But information sharing is fundamentally about creating, building, and sustaining RELATIONSHIPS. Legislation and mandates can only get us so far. When it comes to leveraging the full scope of the public safety community in the United States for homeland security purposes, a constant effort to build relationships and develop trusted mechanisms is how it will get done.

That's where the NFCA comes in. It is our association's mission to support the development of the National Network of Fusion Centers and improved information sharing. Since we formed 3 years ago, we have made a point of fostering relationship development across the network and vertically among Federal, State, local, Tribal, territorial, and private-sector stakeholders. We work regularly with these stakeholders, and we just approved the addition of a representative from the Major Cities Chiefs Intelligence Commanders Group on the NFCA Executive Board. Progress does not happen overnight. Those who expect a switch to be flipped and have instant and seamless sharing of information on threats across all possible stakeholders are bound to be disappointed. The appropriate vision for intelligence collaboration and information sharing was laid out by the 9/11 Commission and was emphasized in the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004: A decentralized, distributed network that involves all levels of government and collaborates routinely on information analysis and sharing with Federal intelligence and law enforcement partners.

The thankless business of improving intelligence and information-sharing preparedness is often carried out in efforts coordinated by the Criminal Intelligence Coordinating Council (CICC). The CICC is a strong and trusted mechanism for coordinating all the relevant stakeholders in this mission. The CICC and its research arm—the Global Intelligence Working Group (GIWG)—have been responsible for developing and fostering Nation-wide adoption of standards for sharing criminal intelligence.

The GIWG and the CICC focus on the development of documents that have the force of National policy and are widely adhered to. They have facilitated the development of the National Criminal Intelligence Sharing Plan, Law Enforcement Analytic Standards, technical data exchange standards, Fusion Center Privacy Policies, Fusion Center Guidelines, Baseline Capabilities for Fusion Centers, and have contributed to the National Strategy for Information Sharing, among other important initiatives. This institutionalized collaboration in the development of policy is needed to ensure the continued commitment and building of trust among the greatest possible number of stakeholders. It is how improvements in National preparedness in this area will continue to be matured.

Despite our progress, we are concerned that 10 years without a major attack has led to a level of apathy. All stakeholders must continue to invest in the long-term effort to improve our capacity to share information. If the Federal Government does not continue to take steps to ensure the National Network is strengthened and sustained, we will start moving away from the vision of the 9/11 Commission and IRTPA, leaving the Nation more vulnerable to successive attacks on public safety—large and small—that could have been prevented through a well-supported National Network of Fusion Centers.

We think the National Preparedness Report shows a continued need for focused investment in the Network as the core homeland security information sharing and intelligence analysis facilitator in partnership with State, local, Federal, and Tribal law enforcement, fire, emergency management, and public health agencies. To the extent that the NPR is a "roll-up" of individual State preparedness reports, law enforcement entities in many States have not been as integrated into the development of the State reports as they should be. In fact, it appears that the methodology used to create the NPR is not as analytically rigorous as it should be. The National Network of Fusion Centers was not consulted in a systematic way. If the Network is a pillar of our National preparedness, then the report should not be developed without a coordinated process directly with the fusion centers. As future State preparedness reports are generated, the NFCA recommends that Homeland Security Advisors and State Emergency Managers integrate information directly from fusion centers in their States. We are pleased that data was integrated into the NPR from the detailed assessment of the National Network of Fusion Centers that is conducted annually by the DHS Office of Intelligence and Analysis. But the appropriate stage for engagement of the fusion centers in preparedness reports is also at the State level. Going forward, the NFCA will encourage direct State-level interactions in addition to the use of data collected through the annual fusion center assessment process.

While we agree with the NPR's key finding on the National Network, we do not think the report provides helpful context for the capability percentage ratings it lays out. There have been dramatic improvements in recent years, and I would argue that these improvements are actually accelerating. We all recognize that the wave of a magic wand will not result in an ideal operating situation. When you are in the business of developing, shaping, and maintaining an intelligence and information-sharing culture across governmental and jurisdictional lines, you are constantly pressing for incremental improvements over time.

And that is what we've seen. From the development and implementation of the Nation-wide Suspicious Activity Reporting Initiative (NSI), to the enhanced support provided to the National Network by DHS Intelligence & Analysis, to increased FBI/JTTF interactions and collocation with fusion centers, to improvements in analysis and sharing technology, to deeper relationships across the National Network and within States, our preparedness has gotten steadily more robust. Through our work on the CICC, we have had substantial input into the refresh of the National Information Sharing Strategy. I think that strategy will lay out a way ahead that reflects both the progress made and the focused investments of energy and resources that will be needed over the next decade.

We can see that a National intelligence enterprise is being created by connecting fusion centers, their information sharing and analysis partners, JTTFs, the HIDTA Investigative Support Centers, the RISS centers, major city and major county intelligence centers, the Nation-wide SAR Initiative, and the FBI Field Intelligence Groups (FIGs). This enterprise has been woven into a protective fabric for our Nation. The enterprise has matured because partners have rolled up their sleeves and created solutions that are crossing boundaries efficiently. Strong leadership from the DHS Office of Intelligence and Analysis, the Office of the Program Manager of the

Information Sharing Environment, the Bureau of Justice Assistance at the Department of Justice, the Nation-wide Suspicious Activity Reporting Initiative's Program Management Office (NSI–PMO) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation has resulted in the strengthening of governance structures that are intended to lower barriers between Federal, State, and local organizations.

Of course there is a lot of room for improvement. Intelligence and information-sharing capability gaps that we must continue to address include:

- standardized or harmonized platforms for secure messaging across the National Network of Fusion Centers and with our Federal partners;
- training and retention of high-quality analytical personnel across the National Network;
- sustainable funding support for the National Network through DHS preparedness grants;
- broadening and deepening of fusion center relationships with all relevant stakeholders in our States, including Governors' homeland security advisors, emergency managers, and critical infrastructure owners and operators;
- tighter coordination of information collection, analysis, and sharing with our Federal partners;
- secure and reliable access to classified systems, specifically FBI systems, and reforms that allow cleared fusion center personnel to have the same access as DHS I&A and FBI personnel to FBI classified systems; and
- recognition of security clearances across agencies and domains to ensure timely and efficient access to relevant information.

One issue that we are currently dealing with provides a good illustration of how far we have come in terms of the intelligence and information-sharing element of National preparedness, and the challenges that still remain.

Earlier this year the FBI Terrorist Screening Center halted sharing of "encounter notifications" with fusion centers in the manner in which they previously had been shared. Briefly, encounter notifications refer to the notices sent by the TSC to fusion centers regarding any Governmental agencies' encounters with individuals on the consolidated Terrorist Watchlist in the interior of the country—for example in traffic stops. The NFCA discussed the issue directly with TSC leadership and others at the FBI. We convened a conference call with the TSC, FBI, DHS, NFCA, International Association of Chiefs of Police, National Sheriffs' Association, Major County Sheriffs' Association, Major Cities Chiefs Association, Association of State Criminal Investigative Agencies, CICC, and the Governors' Homeland Security Advisory Council to address the issue. Just days later we had worked out a way ahead to ensure encounter notifications were available to all fusion centers going forward. Today the TSC, DHS, and State, local, and Tribal partners are working to address the issue. This kind of broad-based and real-time effort to improve intelligence and information sharing would have been extremely difficult 10 years ago, or even just 5 years ago. The process is never easy, but this enhanced coordination—enabled by the fusion centers—ensures that we continue on the path to greater preparedness.

We cannot have true preparedness without true information sharing. We need to continue to work with the FBI and all our Federal partners to improve sharing of critical information while maintaining operational security and preserving citizens' privacy and civil liberties. In addition, we have to continue working with our Federal partners to develop secure communications platforms that enable efficient information sharing and analytical collaboration. We continue to see several different information-sharing platforms in use across the 18,000 State and local law enforcement agencies in this country. No single entity is in a position to mandate standardization, but efforts continue to ensure data can be shared and received when needed. Event deconfliction is another major area of needed focus. True information sharing includes both threat information and event deconfliction. We believe we need a single National deconfliction system. While there are several good examples of event deconfliction systems in use by different law enforcement agencies, we need to work toward standardization or interoperability of systems.

Overall, we have made excellent progress, but we are not where we want to be. Not a day goes by without conversations among partners that are serving to build the trust, confidence, and relationships necessary to realize true information sharing.

Congress can also play a helpful role. We note that just last week the House passed two bills—H.R. 2764, the WMD Intelligence and Information Sharing Act, and H.R. 3140, the Mass Transit Intelligence Prioritization Act—that have intelligence analysis and information sharing through the National Network of Fusion Centers as a primary purpose. Both pieces of legislation are examples of how Congress can support the incremental improvements we need to make over time to advance our homeland security intelligence- and information-sharing capabilities.

Another way Congress can support these advances is by ensuring sustained grant support for the National Network. This committee shepherded the Implementing 9/11 Commission Recommendations Act of 2007. Section 2006 of that Act mandated that 25% of the UASI and SHSGP preparedness grants be allocated by recipients to "Law Enforcement Terrorism Prevention (LETP) Activities." This is how many States support their primary designated fusion centers with DHS grants. But there is no single funding model for fusion centers, and there is no guarantee that the LETP portion of DHS grant funds will be sufficient to support an adequate level of functionality at every fusion center in every State. A required fusion center investment justification in States' applications for DHS preparedness grants helps, but it does not ensure that allocated funds are sufficient to support a robust fusion process in each State.

Earlier this year the NFCA conducted a survey of its members which revealed that more than 60% of all fusion center funding is provided by State or local governments. Less than 40% is supported by Federal grants.[1] In addition, since fusion center operating budgets do not include the salaries of "donated" personnel assigned by local and State agencies to fusion centers, the contribution ratio of State-to-Federal financial contributions is likely closer to 70/30. This concrete data demonstrates that, consistent with the spirit of Presidential Policy Directive/PPD–8, homeland security intelligence and information sharing is a shared responsibility with shared benefits, and that all stakeholders are sharing in the required investment.

The data also help to dispel a myth we often see reported that fusion centers are DHS entities. DHS did not create the fusion centers, and they do not operate them. No fusion center is funded exclusively with DHS grant dollars. For example, Federal funding through SHSGP constituted 10% of the Florida Fusion Center's $2.7 million budget in fiscal year 2011. At the Joint Regional Intelligence Center (JRIC) in Los Angeles, combined SHSGP and UASI grant funding comprised just over 40% of the $12.7 million budget in fiscal year 2011.

DHS recognizes the value of a robust National Network of Fusion Centers as critical to homeland security intelligence analysis and information sharing, and they have focused resources and other support to the centers as an invaluable partner to help nurture the National Network. Secretary Napolitano, Under Secretary for Intelligence and Analysis (I&A) Caryn Wagner, and Deputy Under Secretary for I&A Scott McAllister deserve great credit for requiring that States include an investment justification for fusion centers in their applications for UASI and SHSGP funding beginning with the fiscal year 2011 grant guidance. We were pleased to see this guidance remain in place in fiscal year 2012. This sends a clear signal—the right signal—that Federal-State-local partnerships to receive, gather, analyze, and share information to prevent terrorism will remain a top priority for DHS investment.

Grant funds allocated to fusion centers help to build and sustain "critical operational capabilities" or COCs—defined as the ability to receive, analyze, disseminate, and gather information on threats to the homeland. Going forward, NFCA strongly supports the continued fusion center investment justification requirement, since this will assure that gaps in critical operational capabilities identified in the annual fusion center assessments are addressed across the National Network.

As the threat of homegrown violent extremism (HVE) has risen, the role of State and local law enforcement has become indispensable in detecting and preventing terror attacks. Efforts are underway through the Nation-wide Suspicious Activity Reporting Initiative (NSI)—supported by the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Justice—to train State, local, and Tribal law enforcement officers to recognize and report behavior-based suspicious activity. The fusion centers are essential in this effort as both training hubs and receivers of suspicious activity reporting. As the newly-published NSI Annual Report for 2011 states, "fusion centers are uniquely situated to provide an analytic context to SAR data, an essential element of NSI's overall mission."

The NSI Annual Report indicates that as of March, 2012 68 fusion centers have the capability to contribute and share SARs. More than 250,000 front-line law enforcement officers have received NSI Line Officer Training. Training tailored to other public safety sectors has also been developed, which will expand the ability of those in the best position to notice suspicious activity will know what to do. The quality and quantity of SARs have increased over time, especially as implementation of NSI has progressed. As of March, more than 43,000 searches had been conducted by analysts authorized to use the system, and more than 17,000 SAR reports were available in the system.

[1] National Fusion Center Association membership survey, March, 2012. Fifty-six out of the 77 fusion centers responded. Survey responses were not independently audited or verified.

There is still a lot to be done to fully implement NSI, but the progress has been encouraging. Over the past year we have worked closely with the FBI and the NSI Program Office to address challenges related to input of SAR information into accessible databases for timely analysis. The NSI recently implemented a technical solution that allows fusion center SAR information to be submitted to the NSI Federated Search system and simultaneously to the FBI's eGuardian system. In addition, the NFCA signed onto a "unified message" earlier this year with several Federal, State, and local law enforcement organizations regarding suspicious activity reporting that emphasizes collaboration, sharing, and lanes of responsibility, while calling for advanced training and strict adherence to the privacy and civil rights policies and responsibilities that we are obligated to observe.

Information sharing and intelligence collaboration efforts continue to develop. We are intimately involved in the refresh of the National Information Sharing Strategy. We are pleased with the way the intergovernmental discussions have gone over the past year, and the quality of ideas put on the table has been good. Kshemendra Paul, the Program Manager for the Information Sharing Environment, has made substantial contributions and has ensured that our perspectives are carefully considered. There is a sense of real commitment to make the revised strategy a document that will serve us well and set a clear direction. We believe the strategy should be a living document that is updated more frequently and flexes as developments occur.

In addition, the NFCA has begun working with DHS to conduct an exercise later this year regarding Critical Operational Capability No. 1—Receive. This is likely to involve the entire National Network of Fusion Centers and will help assess progress and identify areas for improvement. Fusion centers continue efforts to train "fusion liaison officers" or "FLOs". Thousands of State, local, and Tribal law enforcement officers have received FLO training and the centers are committed to continue this training. Supporting this training is one of the primary reasons that we need to ensure sustained funding is available.

Another example of our enhanced level of preparedness is the event that I plan to attend immediately after this hearing: A secure video teleconference jointly held by DHS and FBI along with the National Network of Fusion Centers and Governors' homeland security advisors. The call will outline the current threat environment, and will also consider suspicious activity reporting, SAR training, and engagement with the public.

We have made tremendous progress and our level of preparedness has increased significantly in recent years. Fusion center directors are committed to continuous improvement and are engaging at the operational and strategic levels every day across the National Network and with our Federal partners. We continue to push for more advances, build trust, and overcome obstacles. I realize that these activities rarely rise to the level of Congressional awareness, but the examples I mentioned are just a few of the many efforts happening today. As a result of sustained focus at all levels, we are better prepared to gather, analyze, and share information and intelligence that improves our homeland—and hometown—security. We ask for your continued support for these initiatives.

Thank you again on behalf of the National Fusion Center Association for the opportunity to provide our perspectives.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Thank you very much.

Now to Dr. Benjamin. I apologize if I mispronounced your first name. But you are recognized, sir, for 5 minutes.

## STATEMENT OF GEORGES C. BENJAMIN, M.D., EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, AMERICAN PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION

Dr. BENJAMIN. Mr. Chairman, you are right on target. It is Georges Benjamin.

Let me thank you very much for having me, Mr. Chairman and Members of the committee, to represent the views of the public health community.

We have certainly had a long and proud history of providing emergency preparedness in public health emergencies. As you may know, we have really been challenged for many, many years of underinvestment in public health, but since September 11, 2001, and of course the subsequent anthrax attacks in the years that followed, we have really made a substantial investment. I have no question that that has improved the health and well-being and preparedness of the Nation.

However, there are concerns of where we have gone because of infrastructure loss and funding loss. I think the report is a good report, that the writers ought to be commended. But I do want to add some emphasis on one area of the report where they talk about some of the infrastructure loss in the public health system.

During the anthrax attacks, I actually happened to be the secretary of health in Maryland. In my testimony, we learned several lessons, and let me just focus on a couple of them. One was that preparedness is everybody's second job. No matter whether or not you are an administrative clerk or an epidemiologist in the maternal/child health program, or whether you do the AIDS programs, preparedness is everybody's secondary job. The second thing, more importantly, we were lucky. Had we had another big event that occurred, we would have been really challenged to respond.

In light of some of those concerns, I would just point out to you a big pertussis outbreak that is going on right now in Washington State. Pertussis is whooping cough. Most of us have certainly been vaccinated as children for pertussis, and yet they have had for the last 21 weeks an amazing outbreak that has occurred. They have had over 1,900 cases, compared to 154 cases during the same time period last year. That outbreak continues to grow. There are lots of, probably, reasons for that: Some changes in vaccine formulation, people who haven't gotten vaccinated. But having said that, they are very concerned about their inability to respond as effectively as they would like to because of staffing shortages that have occurred in their State, at least in some parts of their State.

Also, we have had reductions in some of the public health laboratories in the Nation. An excellent example here is in New Jersey, where the number of scientists certified to work on select agents, the ones you are most concerned about with terrorism, is down from 15 to 5. I think you would agree that that means that their surge capacity is greatly impaired.

As you look at the workforce in public health, we have lost over 52,000 people since 2008 within the public health workforce. If you look at programs, for example, that have been downsized, about 23 percent of the local health department programs, local health departments in the country, have cuts in their emergency preparedness programs, specifically, in addition to many, many other programmatic cuts.

Of course, the biggest challenge we have is around funding. I call it yo-yo funding, where we put a fair amount of money into something, respond to a crisis, and then just before we really get it all taken care of, we begin to then down-cycle the funding. That doesn't build a sustainable, long-term system. I think if we did that for defense, we would be in a terrible, terrible shape.

I think as we—my testimony also talks about our concern about many of the cuts. There is not, obviously, enough time to go through all of those various concerns about funding. But having said this, I think we need to begin looking at a much more sustainable, long-term funding mechanism that helps us integrate public health within the rest of emergency preparedness. We have gone a long way to doing that. I mean, we are no longer showing up at emergencies, like we did before 2001, exchanging business cards. That does not occur anymore. Public health folks know the emergency preparedness folks, they know the police and fire and EMS folks. They work very, very well together. But the erosion of our system, I think, remains a big concern to us, particularly if we have something that is catastrophic.

With that, I thank you very much for your attention and certainly will answer any questions that you have.

[The statement of Dr. Benjamin follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF GEORGES C. BENJAMIN

JUNE 6, 2012

Chairman Bilirakis, Ranking Member Richardson and Members of the subcommittee, my name is Dr. Georges Benjamin and I am the executive director of the American Public Health Association (APHA). Founded in 1872, APHA is the oldest, largest, and most diverse organization of public health professionals in the world. The association aims to protect all Americans and their communities from preventable, serious health threats and strives to assure community-based health promotion and disease prevention activities and preventive health services are universally accessible in the United States. APHA represents a broad array of health providers, educators, environmentalists, policy-makers, and health officials at all levels working both within and outside Governmental organizations and educational institutions. I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you today to discuss the state of public health emergency preparedness and thank you for your leadership on this important topic.

The Nation's public health system has a long and proud history of providing services during public health emergencies by providing a range of services from acute infectious disease detection, post-disaster environmental risk assessment, and long-term surveillance for emerging post-disaster threats to health. The public health system then works to make us safer by preventing or mitigating these risks to health using a variety of clinical and nonclinical interventions. For many years we as a Nation had underinvested in public health system emergency preparedness, however, since the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001 and the subsequent anthrax attacks later that year, significant investments in public health preparedness and response have occurred. There is no question that these investments have greatly improved the Nation's overall ability to prevent, respond to, and recover from public health emergencies including bioterrorism, chemical incidents, radiological and nuclear events, infectious disease outbreaks and natural disasters. However, we still have a long way to go to achieve a level of optimal preparedness. In fact, we have had significant regression in the infrastructure needed to achieve this desired level.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency's 2012 National Preparedness Report highlights many of the improvements we have seen since 2001 across a wide range of preparedness activities and highlights several areas where we have made enormous progress. I believe the report authors should be commended for the areas where they have focused most intently. There is one area of the report however, that does require more detail to give the committee a fuller understanding of the Nation's level of public health and medical preparedness. That area is found on page 47 where a key finding of the reports notes "The Nation has built a highly respected public health capability for managing incidents, but recent reductions in public health funding and personnel have impacted these capabilities." I would like to give a more complete explanation about the impact that current funding and workforce reductions have on the ability of the public health system to respond not only to public health emergencies, but also to undertake the day-to-day responsibilities that keep our communities safe and healthy.

THE STATE OF PUBLIC HEALTH PREPAREDNESS

There are core functional capacities you want in a public health preparedness system. You want to know when a disease syndrome first enters a community, the ability to rapidly identify the cause of the disease and how it is contracted, the ability to conduct accurate new case findings and tracking, the ability to communicate effectively to a range of stakeholders (including the public) and disease containment and treatment ability. In a terror attack the forensic component of these efforts magnify the importance of these requirements. Over the past several years we have had significant erosion in our core capacity to do many of these things. Let me start by putting it in perspective and relate the critical role Federal programs and funding play in State and local public health emergency preparedness and response activities.

During the anthrax attacks in October 2001, I was the secretary of health for the State of Maryland. Baltimore City and all 23 of Maryland's counties responded in order to treat people who had been exposed through the U.S. postal system or in the Hart Senate Office Building and to address, State-wide, white powder reports which paralyzed the Nation. This experience taught me several important lessons:

- *A good plan is an essential first step*.—Fortunately for Maryland, we had previously developed a public health preparedness plan and had some early capacity because of my interest in preparedness (I am an emergency physician) and more importantly, a small grant from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). We also learned how important it is to actually exercise the plan because it had been untested and many lessons were learned from actually having to use it.
- *Disease response does not recognize borders*.—The index case in the Washington, DC area was a Maryland resident who was exposed in Washington, DC and hospitalized in Virginia. Only the Federal Government can build a regional capacity to address this kind of disease exposure. No single jurisdiction could have handled this alone. A robust surveillance system, sustained training, and local, State, and Federal cooperation is required for an adequate response.
- *Delivering countermeasures is complex*.—The Maryland plan anticipated the need to get pharmaceuticals in large amounts quickly and recognized the turnaround time to get the contents of the strategic National stockpile (SNS) was longer than we could wait. We had a short-term plan to utilize the pharmacy system from our mental health system for pharmaceuticals (Cipro) until the SNS was available. This temporary system worked but we recognized the benefits of the SNS as soon as it became available because of the prolonged nature of the Nation-wide response to the anthrax letters. We designed an on-the-spot distribution system and when the SNS supply arrived we distributed it to local health departments all over the State during the night. If the SNS did not exist or if we had not owned our own hospitals we would not have had any meaningful capacity to respond. Those exposed would have had anthrax in their systems for much longer periods of time and we may have had many other serious cases.
- *Communication is a big deal*.—Anthrax is a rare disease to the general practicing medical community. Over days and weeks our call center was swamped with calls from health professionals looking for current diagnostic and therapeutic information about anthrax. We also had numerous calls from the general public and the media seeking reliable information. Our ability to utilize a range of communication tools from automated telephone responses, our web page, press releases, news conferences and live call takers was essential to keeping the people informed and calm. The newly instituted Health Alert Network was an important enterprise-wide communication tool that provided reliable public health information in a timely way on a regular basis. These efforts were coordinated with a range of State, local, and Federal agencies. In those days every health department in America did not have ready access to email as we do today. Clearly our National capacity to respond is more effective when we have a system that can leverage all of the available components.
- *Preparedness is everyone's secondary job for surge capacity*.—Our disease surveillance staffs were superb but we were often challenged to keep up with our day-to-day responsibilities before the attacks. When the attacks occurred, we utilized many other staff from across the agencies that were in programs unrelated to public health preparedness to use their skills in support of this emergency response. In this way, chronic disease epidemiologists, maternal child health epidemiologists, and HIV/AIDS workers were recruited to help. Often working 18 to 20 hours a day, sleeping on the floor or on cots in their offices, these heroic public servants did what was required to respond to this effort. Erosion in other programs unrelated to preparedness has a negative impact on the ability of a public health agency to scale up when a disaster occurs.
- *A robust National public health laboratory network is essential*.—Maryland is fortunate to have had one of the best public health laboratories in the country. A public health laboratory is very different from a hospital or clinical laboratory. We served as the reference lab for many lab samples, the prime testing lab for many clinical and nonclinical samples and the link to the FBI for forensic samples. Our laboratory was swamped with samples from sources all over

Maryland and the District (as their laboratory did not have appropriate equipment to do the testing at the time). Over 300 samples a day came into the lab for several weeks. All of the positive samples required follow-up with the sender and had to follow a chain of custody to be sent to the FBI. This relatively limited and small, but serious incident (five letters), completely inundated our system. It was a massive undertaking for months and a staffing and logistical challenge. The Federally-supported laboratory response network played a critical role in our response activities.

- *We were lucky*.—Five letters resulted in a Nation-wide event with 17 cases of illness, five deaths, more than 33,000 people being placed on antibiotics and thousands of emergency responses because of the fear that any white powder discovered could be anthrax. In Maryland, an additional naturally-occurring outbreak such as a food-borne outbreak at a restaurant, a wedding, or a second terror attack with another agent would have been impossible to manage effectively with our existing State infrastructure at the time.

I have followed the progress of Maryland's efforts since I left in December 2002 and have been generally pleased that the State and the agency have continued to improve on their preparedness system and have effectively switched to an all-hazards approach, as has most of the Nation. Yet, I remain concerned about erosion in capacity of the system when I see what is happening in places like Washington State where an outbreak of pertussis continues to grow and response capacity is hampered by the deterioration of the local public health infrastructure in particular.

The State of Washington began experiencing an outbreak of pertussis about 21 weeks ago. Pertussis is a disease commonly found in childhood that has been greatly eliminated because of a safe and effective vaccine given during childhood. As of May 26, 2012 there have been 1,947 reported cases, 127 under the age of 1 with 30 of them hospitalized. As of this reporting there have not been any deaths. This is compared to 154 reported cases during the same time period in 2011. The outbreak continues to grow. While the exact causes of the outbreak are unclear, it may be related to children not getting their full series of vaccinations and waning protection in the previous vaccine due to changes in the vaccine formulation.

Responding to this outbreak is believed to be hampered by staffing shortages in some parts of the State (as reported in the *New York Times* on May 12, 2012 and in my personal communications with the Washington State Health Officer). My concern is that this is a superb State health department with solid leadership that has to contend with dwindling resources particularly at the local level. According to reports mentioned above, local health departments in Washington have experienced reductions in funding due to the recession, resulting in diminished staffing levels, and as a consequence, affected their ability to respond in a more effective manner. I am very concerned that this represents a microcosm of what is awaiting the rest of the Nation as our infrastructure further dwindles. If we cannot address a large but classic outbreak I have real concerns about our ability to respond effectively to a novel or an intentional one.

Our Nation's public health laboratories are also facing serious challenges due to funding and staffing reductions. According to surveys conducted by the Association of Public Health Laboratories, which represents laboratories with a public health mission, many public health laboratories have also lost staff and have had to curtail other important programs in order to maintain preparedness capabilities. The State Public Health Laboratory in California, for instance, had to eliminate a training program intended to produce laboratory workforce leadership in order to maintain adequate preparedness funding. In New Jersey, the number of scientists certified to work on select agents (testing on biothreat materials, like anthrax) has been reduced from 15 down to 5, threatening the State's laboratory surge capacity in the event of a public health emergency or disease outbreak. Massachusetts has also been forced to reduce other areas of funding in order to maintain its preparedness activities, including reductions in laboratory oversight management and quality assurance.

As a Nation we are facing two major challenges that this committee should be aware of as you assess the state of public health emergency preparedness in America: The public health workforce crisis and worsening fiscal support.

## AN ERODING PUBLIC HEALTH WORKFORCE

Our State and local health departments continue to struggle with significant job losses and painful budget cuts. Unfortunately, State and local budgets have not recovered from the recession. Since 2008, more than 52,000 public health jobs have been lost at local health departments and State and regional health agencies. These numbers represent 17 percent of the State and territorial public health workforce and 22 percent of the local public health workforce.

State and territorial health agencies continue to report on-going job losses and budget cuts to critical public health programs. According to the most recent survey of State health agencies conducted in March 2012 by the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials, between July 1 and December 31, 2011, 30 percent reported staff layoffs, 41 percent reported the loss of staff through attrition, 24 percent reported cutting entire programs and 46 percent reported a reduction in services provided. Cumulatively, since 2008, the numbers are even greater with 56 percent reporting layoffs, 62 percent cutting entire programs, and 91 percent reporting a reduction in services provided.

The situation is just as dire among local health departments. According to a January 2012 survey of local health departments conducted by the National Association of County and City Health Officials, 57 percent of local health departments reduced or eliminated at least one public health program in 2011, with emergency preparedness activities taking the biggest hit. Twenty-three percent of local health departments reported cuts to emergency preparedness programs in 2011. The effects of the recession continue to be felt among local health departments with 41 percent of departments reporting that their current year's budget is less than the previous year and 41 percent reporting that they expect additional cuts in the coming fiscal year.

A PATTERN OF DESTRUCTIVE CYCLIC FUNDING FOR PUBLIC HEALTH

Funding for public health programs has a history of "yo-yo funding." That is, funding continues until we get improvements in capacity and improved health outcomes, then the funding cycles downward only to find the problem return often at an increased overall cost. This happens at the Federal, State, and local level. An unreliable, insufficient, and unsustainable funding pattern erodes system preparedness for all hazards and threats and leaves our Nation at risk.

Like many domestic programs critical Federal dollars that fund many of the public health emergency preparedness activities that fall to our State and local health departments continue to decline. According to the report *Ready or Not? Protecting the Public from Diseases, Disasters, and Bioterrorism* issued by Trust for America's Health in December 2011, from 2005 to 2012, Federal funding for State and local preparedness activities has been reduced by more than 38 percent (when adjusted for inflation).

CDC's Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP) program is the foundation and bedrock of public health preparedness in the United States. The program provides critical resources, scientific expertise, and coordination to ensure that our State and local health departments are prepared to respond to an emergency and to ensure that all Americans will be protected. Unfortunately, funding for this critical program has decreased significantly over the past several years. Reductions to this funding will certainly limit the ability of our health departments to monitor, assess, and respond to public health threats in their communities. These cuts could impact the capacity of disease surveillance staff to detect an outbreak or a bioterrorist attack, which would limit the ability of State laboratories to quickly respond to the surges in testing that would be needed, and hamper the ability of State and local health authorities to respond adequately in order to protect the public from exposure or ensure the rapid distribution of life-saving medicine and medical supplies. Unfortunately, the President's budget request would reduce support for State and local preparedness by an additional $8 million in fiscal year 2013.

Funding for the Strategic National Stockpile is also at risk. As noted earlier the SNS is an essential component of the Nation's ability to ensure an adequate supply of critical medicine and equipment to aid State and local public health agencies are armed with the tools they need to respond to a National health emergency. Experience has shown how valuable the SNS supplies of antibiotics, chemical antidotes, and other life-saving medicines and equipment are when local supplies become depleted during an emergency. CDC's ability to maintain the SNS and State and local government's ability to implement the distribution are dependent on a well-funded, agile, and reliable system. In addition to supplies, it is the strategically coordinated distribution plans that Federal, State, and local government have designed and are required to exercise regularly that will impact how quickly and thoroughly these supplies are distributed. Sustained funding is essential to maintain a sense of readiness for this capacity.

Unfortunately, funding for the SNS was reduced by $57 million in fiscal year 2012 and the President's fiscal year 2013 budget request proposes cutting this critical funding by an additional $48 million in fiscal year 2013. By cutting this funding, we jeopardize efforts to develop initiatives to reduce distribution response times. Reductions in this funding also put the Nation at risk of being unprepared and unable to provide needed medication to all persons affected by a public health emergency. The SNS supply must be replenished when the shelf life of the medications expire. Additionally, the facilities maintained and staff involved in the production of the medical countermeasures must be in place to appropriately respond to the changing needs of the stockpile. Speed, sufficient supplies and staff who know and have practiced using the plans are all essential to a rapid response and recovery.

Another key Federal program that provides needed resources to State and local health departments to prepare and respond to all hazards is the Hospital Preparedness Program (HPP) administered by the HHS Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response. Funding provided through this critical program enhances and improves overall medical surge capacity at hospitals and other key components of the health care system in a public health emergency. We have seen the value of this program very recently in Joplin, Missouri. After the tornadoes devastated that city last year, roughly 30 percent of the city of Joplin's infrastructure was destroyed including St. John's Regional Medical Center, which had to evacuate all 183 patients from the facility. Equipment funded through the HPP assisted staff in evacuating patients down as many as eight flights of stairs and a fully operational 60-bed mobile medical unit was deployed and fully operational within a week of the tornado. This program, unfortunately, is also at risk. The President's fiscal year 2013 budget request proposes to reduce funding for HPP by $142 million or 36 percent.

In addition to reductions in funding for State and local preparedness and response capabilities, we are also concerned with the declining funds for CDC's preparedness and response activities. While the President's budget request provides a small $9 million increase for fiscal year 2013, funding for CDC's internal capacity has declined by nearly 50 percent since fiscal year 2006. With this funding, CDC operates its Emergency Operations Center around the clock and serves a critical role providing rapid logistical support to deploy personnel and transfer supplies and equipment to support State and local authorities on the front lines during public health emergencies. The center also plays a central role in activating response operations, deploying personnel to disaster zones and investigating health security threats. Continued underfunding of CDC's preparedness and response activities will undermine the agency's ability to coordinate communications and response activities and to provide scientific, logistical, and personnel support to State and local responders.

APHA is also very concerned about the additional blow that the pending sequestration would have on funding for public health programs broadly. As you know, the Budget Control Act created a process known as sequestration to encourage the so-called "supercommittee" to come up with a viable deficit reduction proposal. Because the supercommittee failed to reach agreement on a plan, sequestration, or across-the-board cuts to discretionary funding estimated in the range of 8–10 percent, is scheduled to take place in January 2013. Cuts of an additional 8–10 percent on top of the recent cuts to Federal preparedness programs would be nothing short of devastating. Cuts of this magnitude could eliminate funding for the 10 National Level 1 chemical labs, shut down CDC's emergency operations center, and further reduce funding for SNS and other State and local preparedness funding.

## CONCLUSION

Public health has historically been asked to do more with less. It is now at a breaking point. Unless we start supporting our public health system in a more sustained way, our capacity will continue to erode and our ability to respond quickly and competently will evaporate. Funding public health emergencies once the disaster has already occurred is not an effective way to ensure either preparedness or accountability.

We must have a robust public health system with adequate levels of personnel who are well-trained and properly equipped to address a variety of public health threats. Additionally, the ability to generate immediate surge capacity by using an "all hands on deck" and "whole of community" approach is essential and requires a better recognition of the role other components of the public health system plays in preparedness. Funding is tight at all levels of Government but as the economy recovers and we begin to make new strategic investments in homeland defense, Congress must make funding the public health system a top priority. Protecting the public's health is a matter of National security.

Time and again, we have failed to think more strategically about the future of our Nation's public health system, to develop a blueprint for where we want to be in the future and how best to fund it. APHA believes that far more significant sustained investments in public health need to occur if we are to prepare the Nation's public health system to protect us from the leading causes of death, and prepare us for a rapid response to a range of public health emergencies, whether naturally occurring or the result of a chemical, biological, radiological, or nuclear attack.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today about state of the Nation's preparedness and our ability to deal with public health emergencies. On behalf of the American Public Health Association, I look forward to working with you to strengthen all aspects of our Nation's public health infrastructure to ensure the health and safety of the American public. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Thank you, Doctor.

I want to thank all of you for your testimony.

I will go ahead and recognize myself for 5 minutes. First question for Mr. Madden.

Since the State Preparedness Reports were critical components in developing the National Preparedness Report, I am interested in learning more about how States develop their annual preparedness reports. I am concerned that the self-assessment survey the States filled out did not allow for States to accurately portray the current State preparedness.

Can you explain more about the self-assessment surveys that States filled out this year? Did this survey allow Alaska, specifically, to accurately report its capacity levels in all 31 core capabilities?

When Alaska was developing its preparedness report, was your office able to solicit input from the local emergency management and law enforcement personnel and others for input? In other words, was there time allotted, did you have the opportunity to get input from the community?

Mr. MADDEN. Sir, I think that we found ourselves in a position of collecting far more information and insight than there was room to put into the State Preparedness Report. The format was, I understand, limited so that they could quickly aggregate the 50 States and get the depth and breadth of the issues.

We worked very strongly with our local jurisdictions, along with the other disciplines of fire, police. We also worked with the private sector, with which we have a very powerful—it is a very strong public-private partnership. We gained the access that allowed us to increase our effectiveness even if there was not room for it inside the State Preparedness Report. So it was of value to us to work broadly and deeply on these issues.

But the return, so far, returns back into the State and local for us to improve our priorities. It has not yet reached that level of sophistication where that can be immediately brought into the National Preparedness Report. That is why I believe the emphasis has to be on that analysis and problem solving that the States are using to set our priorities.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Very good. Thank you. Appreciate it.

Mr. Sena, in recent years, we have seen a dramatic shift in the terrorist threat, which now includes plots from homegrown and lone-wolf actors in addition to attacks formally directed by al-Qaeda and other affiliates. We must be prepared to prevent and, if necessary, respond to a variety of techniques, as you know, including vehicle-borne IEDs, the potential for secondary attacks to target first responders, or, as we read in the recent issue of the al-

Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, the *Inspire* magazine, possibly even wildfires.

Given this shift, I believe that first responders like firefighters should be more fully integrated into the fusion center network and certainly be included as recipients of intelligence information. If you can give me some information on that and give me your opinions on that.

Do fusion centers include local firefighters presently as recipients of intelligence bulletins and products? Although many fusion centers in the network include fire services into the analytic ranks and/or the liaison programs, many, I understand, do not. In your opinion, what is the best way to incorporate first responders into the fusion center process?

Then I have one more question for you, as well.

Mr. SENA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

As far as firefighters and—all disciplines should be incorporated into the fusion center process. Information sharing is not a solely law enforcement function. It should include emergency managers, public health, all of the other disciplines that are available. As far as incorporation in fusion centers, those disciplines have a perspective that law enforcement, a person like myself, doesn't quite understand the needs that they have in the field for their personnel.

As far as the network and dissemination, fire services are heavily involved in that. The Fire Service Intelligence Enterprise was actually worked on with a number of firefighters from New York, Arizona—in fact, one of the firefighters in my own center worked on that project—to develop how the fire service would interrelate into this intelligence enterprise made up of State, local, urban area fusion center partners. They are very valuable to what we do. They are a group of people not acting as agents of the Government for, you know, collection of the data, but if they come across information in the course of their duties, they have the ability, if trained properly, to protect privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties, and move that suspicious activity forward to fusion centers, where that information can be developed and potentially be turned over to the Joint Terrorism Task Force.

As far as the issue regarding the emerging threat of the homegrown violent extremists, traditionally in the intelligence community and our Federal law enforcement partners, the focus has been on those external threats. But looking into the threats coming domestically from those folks who have been self-radicalized either on-line or by, you know, radicalization from small cells within the United States, they had at one point the ability to look beyond, using the intelligence community tools. But those tools do not work domestically because, you know, they don't have those resources within the United States. It is those police officers, firefighters, emergency medical personnel, public health personnel that will contact those radicalized individuals. Based on the defined suspicious activity reporting requirements we have, they will be able to give us the information we need.

Thank you, sir.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Thank you.

I am going to ask one last question. In the interest of time, I wanted to ask Dr. Benjamin, and maybe we can talk afterwards, Mr. Sena, at another time. Then I want to yield to the gentleman from New York.

But, Dr. Benjamin, figures from the National Association of County and City Health Officials show that local health departments are continuing to struggle in the face of difficult fiscal times. I am sure you agree. These departments self-reported that during 2011 they continued to struggle. Fifty-seven percent of them reduced or eliminated services in at least one program area. Of 10 areas in public health, emergency preparedness ranks second-hardest-hit. Your testimony also reflects concern over this decline in local resources; you mention that.

What do you think we might want to ask States in the next preparedness report to perhaps better capture a full picture of the status of public health security in the United States?

Dr. BENJAMIN. Yeah, I would think that it would be helpful to have them report on two or three leading measures about their capacity to respond to an everyday event. You know, if they can't respond to an outbreak of—a foodborne outbreak or something like that, it is going to be very difficult for them to scale up.

So I think having, you know, us identify two or three measures that measure their current capacity to do something routine would, I think, give you a better measure of their capacity to do broader public health preparedness than us thinking about—because we often get hung up in thinking about these big things. When you fill out these kinds of measures, you are thinking, okay, I can do the small stuff, but I can't do the big stuff. But if you can't do the small stuff, you will never get there.

I think that that would be a good way for you to get an early indicator, which I think is what your committee wants to do, an early indicator as a red flag that we need to focus in on that area.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Good suggestion. Thank you very much, sir.

Now I will recognize the gentleman from New York, Mr. Turner, for, within reason, as long as he would like. I will give you Mr. Marino's time, too.

Mr. TURNER. Thirty seconds will be fine.

New York City has no fusion center. Is that a hole in the fabric of the overall system? Is it something that should be addressed or corrected? Is it of concern?

Mr. SENA. As fusion centers were developed, it was left up to the decision of the Governors of each State, urban areas, to develop their fusion centers. Currently, we have 49 State centers, we have 2 territorial centers, and 26 urban areas. As far as the determination of where fusion centers should be, I believe it should be left up to that region. It is not up to the Federal Government to decide, but I believe that those regions should make that decision of whether they need a fusion center or not.

The State of New York has the New York State Intelligence Center, which is the fusion center for the State. They cover a great deal of that area. Right across the way is the New Jersey—the regional intelligence center, "the Rock."

So, between those two centers, there is a great deal of support. But, you know, I would leave it and say that it is up to that area of whether they want to develop that attribute.

Mr. TURNER. Okay. So my fellow New Yorkers are not being unnecessarily problematic, eh?

Mr. SENA. I would say that, you know, as far as looking at gaps in the country, that, you know, bringing fusion centers up to, you know, beyond baseline capabilities and beyond core operation capabilities, having that ability to network—saying that everyone needs a fusion center is not necessarily something that is a good idea. As I found in my own experience, the more operations you may have in a very specific area, the more issues you have with collection, dissemination of information, and having the proper flow of data.

Mr. TURNER. Uh-huh.

Mr. SENA. So it really is up to your city of how they want to build it.

Mr. TURNER. Okay. Diplomatically handled. Thank you.

I yield back.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Thank you.

I have one last question, if you don't mind.

Mr. Madden, again, explain and elaborate on how States are getting the private sector involved in preparation in any operations.

Then if you guys want to elaborate on that issue, I would appreciate it. Thank you.

Mr. MADDEN. Mr. Chairman, Alaska decided early on that we had a partnership with our private infrastructure. They are essential to the conduct of our missions and our economy. In this partnership, we decided not to go sector-by-sector but to invite the members of the key elements and then expand out. We have representatives from tourism, from communications, from transportation, energy.

In our engagement with them, we look at the things that we have in common. We have recently run a very in-depth analysis of the effects of a cyber attack on any one of our members, but looking for the cascading or escalating effects. When we had our volcanic eruptions in 2009, a volcano very close to Anchorage, our largest city, what are the effects of this? We worked it through, and we worked out the effects on maritime traffic, on public health, on the movement of goods and services.

Our private sector is very, very eager to do this, and we are not only sustaining our activities, but we are increasing them across the State. We use very much of a market-driven approach, that there is a return on the investment of their participation. They get not only access to the State so that we can improve our plans, they get access to each other so they can support each other on their continuity efforts.

There cannot be a transportation system without energy. There cannot be an energy system without communications. All of these things put together is our approach to the private sector. I believe my approach within Alaska is representative of many areas around the country.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Excellent. Thank you.

Anyone else want to elaborate and talk about that topic?

Otherwise, I would like to give you a couple minutes, if you would like, to briefly discuss another issue. They just called for votes, but we have a couple more minutes. I think they will hold it open for a while.

Anyone else want to talk about that particular issue or anything else before I——

Dr. BENJAMIN. Let me just add that the recent pandemic flu of H1N1 really gave the public health community an opportunity to work with a broader group than just the health community on continuity plans, the identification of sick people, reporting of disease, treating folks, using innovative ways to do disease control. But it has really opened up an opportunity to do a dialogue with a much broader part of the public health community, which I think will be very productive over the next several years.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Thank you.

Anyone else.

Mr. SENA. Sir?

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Yes, please.

Mr. SENA. For the prevention and what we do as fusion centers, the private sector is critical. They have over 80 percent of what we consider critical infrastructure, key resources within the country. Having them have the knowledge and ability to basically create their own fence and defenses, not in brick structure or, you know, building fences physically, but in the ability to identify suspicious activity reporting, to pass that information.

Then, also, to have that confidence that fusion centers in the Government, going into their facilities to review their security procedures, evaluate their vulnerabilities to attack, is critical to what we do.

Also, you know, having the ability to share information with them, conversely, so that they feel like they are true partners, as they should be, that is critical to what we do.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. I agree. It is all voluntary.

Okay. Anyway, if there is nothing else to add, I really appreciate it very much that you all are here. The testimony was excellent. Of course, I thank the witnesses for their testimony and the Members for their questions.

The Members of the subcommittee may have some additional questions for you, and we ask that you respond in writing. The hearing record will be open for 10 days.

Without objection, the subcommittee stands adjourned. Thank you again.

[Whereupon, at 1:30 p.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

# A P P E N D I X

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Questions Submitted by Chairman Gus M. Bilirakis for Timothy W. Manning

*Question 1.* The 9/11 Commission wrote that "The biggest impediment to an all-source analysis—a greater likelihood of connecting the dots—is the human or systematic resistance to information sharing."

Why in the drafts of the National Planning Frameworks has the Department of Homeland Security limited information and intelligence sharing as a core capability for prevention and protection, rather than as a common core capability across all frameworks?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 2.* A key finding of the report was that the Federal coordination of medical countermeasure efforts across agencies has greatly improved since 2001, a topic on which the subcommittee has focused significant oversight. We have many more countermeasures available, and improved capacity to distribute and dispense them.

Are you confident, however, that this represents a substantial gain in preparedness, such that we could get these countermeasures to all of the people who might need them within the 48-hour window required for some of the doses? While I think we're all comfortable that we could do this on a small scale, are you confident that we could do it effectively on a mass scale of the kind that we worry about in the homeland security context?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 3.* While the Stafford Act exempts certain activities from NEPA requirements, according to Section 301, it does not grant a general authority to waive the requirements for Environmental Impact Statements (EIS) or Environmental Assessments (EA). Given that the delays caused by applying for EIS' and EA's has been an impediment to short- and long-term recovery efforts, has FEMA developed a system to work with the EPA for expedited applications or a waiver process for specific activities related to recovery and mitigation?

Is there an MOU process which covers this issue to allow for short-term construction (housing, temporary public buildings, infrastructure support) to assist with quickly bringing critical infrastructure systems back on-line after an event?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 4.* Because most critical infrastructure is privately owned and operated, there is no public assistance available for rapid restoration. Pursuant to 50 U.S.C. § 5172, the President has the ability to make contributions to a person that owns or operates a structure deemed to be of a "National, critical nature". If the contribution were to be made, it could only happen after the owner/operator had applied for and received the full amount of a Small Business Administration loan.

Has FEMA considered an exception or worked with the White House on the interpretation of the governing regulations to hasten the recovery of critical systems post-event without imposing an undue economic or bureaucratic burden on the owner/operator by virtue of the Title 50 process?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

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