

# BUILDING A 21ST-CENTURY INFRASTRUCTURE FOR AMERICA: THE NATIONAL PREPAREDNESS SYSTEM

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(115-6)

## HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, PUBLIC BUILDINGS, AND  
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON  
TRANSPORTATION AND  
INFRASTRUCTURE  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED FIFTEENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

MARCH 16, 2017

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## CONTENTS

	Page
Summary of Subject Matter .....	v
WITNESSES	
Hon. Catherine Pugh, Mayor, City of Baltimore, on behalf of the United States Conference of Mayors:	
Testimony .....	6
Prepared statement .....	37
Responses to questions for the record from Hon. Lou Barletta, a Representative in Congress from the State of Pennsylvania .....	43
Wendy Smith-Reeve, Director, Arizona Department of Emergency and Military Affairs Division of Emergency Management, on behalf of the National Emergency Management Association:	
Testimony .....	6
Prepared statement .....	46
Responses to questions for the record from Hon. Lou Barletta, a Representative in Congress from the State of Pennsylvania .....	55
Nick Crossley, CEM, CPM, Director, Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency of Hamilton County, Ohio, on behalf of the International Association of Emergency Managers and the National Association of Counties:	
Testimony .....	6
Prepared statement .....	59
Responses to questions for the record from the following Representatives:	
Hon. Lou Barletta of Pennsylvania .....	63
Hon. Brian J. Mast of Florida .....	64
Joseph Lawless, Director of Maritime Security, Massachusetts Port Authority, on behalf of the American Association of Port Authorities:	
Testimony .....	6
Prepared statement .....	65
Questions for the record for Mr. Lawless from Hon. Lou Barletta of Pennsylvania and Hon. Brian J. Mast of Florida .....	68
Art Martynuska, President, Pennsylvania Professional Fire Fighters Association, on behalf of the International Association of Fire Fighters:	
Testimony .....	6
Prepared statement .....	69
Questions for the record for Mr. Martynuska from Hon. Lou Barletta, a Representative in Congress from the State of Pennsylvania .....	74
Thomas Roberts, Assistant Sheriff, Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department:	
Testimony .....	6
Prepared statement .....	75
Responses to questions for the record from Hon. Lou Barletta, a Representative in Congress from the State of Pennsylvania .....	81
William Daroff, Senior Vice President for Public Policy and Director, Washington Office, the Jewish Federations of North America:	
Testimony .....	6
Prepared statement .....	86
Responses to questions for the record from Hon. Lou Barletta, a Representative in Congress from the State of Pennsylvania .....	90
Michael Feinstein, President and Chief Executive Officer, Bender Jewish Community Center of Greater Washington:	
Testimony .....	6
Prepared statement .....	93

IV

	Page
Michael Feinstein, President and Chief Executive Officer, Bender Jewish Community Center of Greater Washington—Continued	
Responses to questions for the record from Hon. Lou Barletta, a Rep- resentative in Congress from the State of Pennsylvania .....	97

SUBMISSIONS FOR THE RECORD

Letter of March 16, 2017, from Nathan J. Diament, Executive Director, Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America, to Hon. Lou Barletta, Chair- man, Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Management .....	99
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Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure  
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March 10, 2017

**SUMMARY OF SUBJECT MATTER**

**TO:** Members, Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings, and  
Emergency Management  
**FROM:** Staff, Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings, and  
Emergency Management  
**RE:** Subcommittee Hearing on “Building a 21st Century Infrastructure for America:  
The National Preparedness System”

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**PURPOSE**

The Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Management will meet on Thursday, March 16, 2017, at 10:00 a.m. in 2167 Rayburn House Office Building, for a hearing titled “Building a 21st Century Infrastructure for America: The National Preparedness System.” The purpose of the hearing is twofold: (1) assess the development, successes, and challenges of the National Preparedness System; and (2) based on input from key stakeholders, understand how well the preparedness grant program is building national preparedness capabilities.

Invited witnesses include the National Emergency Management Association, International Association of Emergency Managers, National Association of Counties, International Association of Fire Chiefs, and representatives of big cities, police, and non-profits.

## **BACKGROUND**

Following the devastating terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, Congress enacted the *Homeland Security Act of 2002* (P.L. 107-296), creating the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) was placed within DHS, but its functions were dispersed among various offices. In 2006, following the failed federal responses to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita and the subsequent intensive Congressional investigations and oversight, Congress enacted the *Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006* (PKEMRA) (P.L. 109-295), which addressed key response roles and authorities and put FEMA back together again within DHS. PKEMRA authorized the National Preparedness System (NPS) and FEMA for the first time in legislation. FEMA was given the role of leading the creation of the NPS and was designated as the “one-stop-shop” for all preparedness grants management.

### **The National Preparedness System—A Framework for Assessing All-Hazard Preparedness**

PKEMRA mandates that the President develop a set of national policies to guide preparedness for all hazards, with the goal of reducing or preventing potentially devastating consequences.<sup>1</sup> On March 30, 2011, Presidential Policy Directive 8: National Preparedness (PPD-8) was issued to guide how the Nation, from the federal level to private citizens, can “prevent, protect against, mitigate the effects of, respond to, and recover from those threats that pose the greatest risk to the security of the Nation.”<sup>2</sup> These threats include terrorist acts, natural disasters, and other man-made incidents. PPD-8 requires a National Preparedness Goal and a series of policies that collectively establish a National Preparedness System.

NPS and the related National Preparedness Goal (the Goal) serve as the framework for assessing preparedness for all hazards. The Goal describes a capabilities-based, end-state objective, and vision for national preparedness:

A secure and resilient Nation with the capabilities required across the whole community to prevent, protect against, mitigate, respond to, and recover from the threats and hazards that pose the greatest risk.<sup>3</sup>

The Goal identified 32 core capabilities necessary to achieve the vision across five mission areas (Prevention, Protection, Mitigation, Response and Recovery), and includes measurable objectives for managing risk. Implementation of the NPS uses a systematic approach to homeland security that supports building, sustaining, and delivering the core capabilities through six components: identifying and assessing the risks we face; estimating capability requirements to meet those risks; building and sustaining capabilities; planning to deliver capabilities; validating those capabilities through exercises and real-world incidents; and then reviewing and updating our capabilities and plans. This capabilities-based approach allows

<sup>1</sup> P.L. 109-295. See 120 Stat. 1424-1432; 6 U.S.C. §741-754.

<sup>2</sup> White House, Presidential Policy Directive 8: National Preparedness, Washington, DC, March 30, 2011, [http://www.dhs.gov/xabout/laws/gc\\_1215444247124.shtm](http://www.dhs.gov/xabout/laws/gc_1215444247124.shtm).

<sup>3</sup> Department of Homeland Security, National Preparedness Goal, First Edition, Washington, DC, September 2011, p. 1, <http://www.fema.gov/pdf/prepared/npg.pdf>. Hereinafter document will be referenced in footnotes as National Preparedness Goal.

communities to develop the resources needed to address all hazards, rather than focusing on resources needs for specific threats and hazards.

Community-specific threats and hazards are assessed using the Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA). THIRA is a four-step common risk assessment process that assists individuals, businesses, faith-based organizations, nonprofit groups, schools and academia, and all levels of government to understand its risks and estimate capability requirements.<sup>4</sup> Once each jurisdiction has determined capability targets through the THIRA process, the jurisdiction assesses its current capability levels against those targets through the State Preparedness Report.<sup>5</sup> FEMA reports the results of the capability assessments annually in the *National Preparedness Report*.

### **Grants Supporting the NPS**

Preparedness grants play an important role in the implementation of the NPS by supporting the building, sustainment, and delivery of core capabilities essential to achieving the Goal. Since 2003, more than \$47 billion in preparedness grant funding has been provided to state, territorial, local, and tribal governments enabling them to build and enhance capabilities by acquiring needed equipment, funding, training opportunities, developing preparedness and response plans, and exercising and building relationships across city, county, and state lines.<sup>6</sup> These investments have provided critical support for interoperable communication systems, first responder training programs, public preparedness campaigns, hazardous materials response, urban search and rescue, and a robust information-sharing network.

Past Administration attempts to consolidate preparedness grant programs into a single grant have been opposed by stakeholder groups and Congress. Currently, groups benefit from discrete funding sources that provide the funds necessary to build and maintain specific preparedness capabilities. Combining all of the grants ignores the targeted investments that are building different capacities and preparedness.

### **Summary of Preparedness (Non-Disaster) Grant Programs**

There are currently 11 preparedness (non-disaster) grant programs administered by FEMA's Grants Program Directorate to assist states, localities, urban areas, tribal and territorial governments, non-profit agencies, and the private sector in strengthening the Nation's ability to prevent, protect, respond to, and recover from terrorist attacks, major disasters, and other emergencies in support of the Goal:

#### **Emergency Management Performance Grant Program (EMPG)<sup>7</sup>**

EMPG provides funding to states to assist state, local, territorial, and tribal governments to prepare for all hazards. These funds assist in obtaining a system of preparedness for the

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.fema.gov/threat-and-hazard-identification-and-risk-assessment>.

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.fema.gov/state-preparedness-report#wcm-survey-target-id>.

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.fema.gov/news-release/2016/06/29/dhs-announces-grant-allocations-fiscal-year-2016-preparedness-grants>

<sup>7</sup> Authorized by 6 U.S.C. §762, and 42 U.S.C. §5121 et seq.

“protection of life and property in the United States from hazards and to vest responsibility for emergency preparedness jointly in the federal government, states, and their political subdivisions.”<sup>8</sup> The EMPG’s priority is to support the implementation of the NPS.

Assistance to Firefighters Grants

The Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) Program focuses on building and maintaining the capabilities of the Nation’s fire service. These grants have helped firefighters obtain equipment, protective gear, training, and other resources needed to protect both the public and firefighters from fires and other hazards. Additionally, the Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grant program assists fire departments, both career and voluntary, with hiring, recruiting, and retaining firefighters. Since 2001, both AFG and SAFER have provided over \$10 billion to the fire service.<sup>9</sup>

Homeland Security Grant Program (HSGP)<sup>10</sup>

HSGP supports state and local activities to prevent terrorism and other catastrophic events and to prepare for threats and hazards that pose the “greatest” risk to the Nation’s security. HSGP is comprised of three grant programs—State Homeland Security Grant Program (SHSP), Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI), and Operation Stonegarden (OPSG).<sup>11</sup> The 9/11 Act provides a “Multiple-Purpose Funds” provision that allows grantees to utilize their HSGP funding for non-terrorism capability-building, as long as the capability can also be used to prevent, prepare for, protect against, or respond to acts of terrorism.

SHSP assists state, tribal, and local governments with preparedness activities that address high priority preparedness gaps across all preparedness core capabilities where a nexus to terrorism exists. Jurisdictions need core capabilities that are “flexible” and determine how to apply resources to address specific threats that pose the greatest risk to specific jurisdictions.<sup>12</sup> All federal investments are based on capability targets and gaps identified during the THIRA process, and assessed in the State Preparedness Report.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>8</sup> U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Emergency Management Performance Grant Program Multi-Year Programmatic Guidance, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Washington, DC, 2016, p. 1. Available at [http://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/1464196875293-190ed88e1b63940c87121a3f0b97b8a5/EMPG\\_Multi\\_Year\\_Program\\_Guidance\\_Final.pdf](http://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/1464196875293-190ed88e1b63940c87121a3f0b97b8a5/EMPG_Multi_Year_Program_Guidance_Final.pdf).

<sup>9</sup> Kruger, Lennard, Assistance to Firefighters Program: Distribution of Fire Grant Funding, Congressional Research Service, January 4, 2016, at 5.

<sup>10</sup> Authorized by 6 U.S.C. §603.

<sup>11</sup> U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Fiscal Year 2016 Homeland Security Grant Program, Washington, DC, 2016, [http://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/1455569937218-3daa3552913b8affe0c6b5bc3b448635/FY\\_2016\\_HSGP\\_NOFO\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/1455569937218-3daa3552913b8affe0c6b5bc3b448635/FY_2016_HSGP_NOFO_FINAL.pdf).

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.fema.gov/national-preparedness-goal>.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.



UASI assists high-threat, high-density urban areas to build and sustain the capabilities necessary to prevent, protect against, mitigate, respond to, and recover from terrorist attacks.<sup>14</sup> Federal UASI investments are based on UASI recipients' THIRA.

OPSG supports enhanced cooperation and coordination among Customs and Border Protection (CBP), U.S. Border Patrol (USBP), and local, tribal, territorial, state, and federal law enforcement agencies. OPSG provides funding to secure the Nation's borders along routes of ingress in states bordering Mexico and Canada, as well as states and territories with international water borders.<sup>15</sup>

*Other Security Grant Programs (IBSGP)*

FEMA also administers a number of security grant programs. The Intercity Bus Security Grant Program<sup>16</sup> supports transportation infrastructure security activities that strengthen against risks associated with potential terrorist attacks. Federal funding is used to harden critical infrastructure and make other physical security enhancements to intercity bus operators serving the Nation's highest-risk metropolitan areas.<sup>17</sup> The Intercity Passenger Rail Security (IPR)<sup>18</sup> supports the Nation's passenger rail system by providing funds for activities that prevent, protect against, mitigate, respond to, and recover from terrorist attacks, including building and sustaining emergency management capabilities, protection of high-risk and high consequence underwater and underground rail assets, and emergency preparedness drills and exercises.<sup>19</sup> The Nonprofit Security Grant Program<sup>20</sup> provides funding support for target hardening and other physical security enhancements to certain non-profit organizations that are at high risk of a terrorist attack and located within one of the fiscal year 2015 UASI-designated urban areas.

- The Port Security Grant Program<sup>21</sup> supports efforts to build and sustain the Goal's<sup>22</sup> core capabilities across the mission areas, with specific focus on addressing the Nation's maritime ports' security needs, including enhancing maritime domain awareness and cybersecurity capabilities, supporting maritime security risk mitigation projects and preparedness training and exercises, and implementing the Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC).<sup>23</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Authorized by 6 U.S.C. §1182.

<sup>17</sup> U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Fiscal Year 2016 Intercity Bus Security Grant Program, Washington, DC, 2016, pp. 1-2, [http://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/1455572728369-69b38a5e2b50a868885ed3a3aa44c269/FY\\_2016\\_IBSGP\\_NOFO.pdf](http://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/1455572728369-69b38a5e2b50a868885ed3a3aa44c269/FY_2016_IBSGP_NOFO.pdf).

<sup>18</sup> Authorized by 6 U.S.C. §1163.

<sup>19</sup> U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Fiscal Year 2016 Intercity Passenger Rail, Washing, DC, 2016, [http://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/1455573274676-c6662c190a6db6a280e4b682df595514/FY\\_2016\\_IPR\\_NOFO.pdf](http://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/1455573274676-c6662c190a6db6a280e4b682df595514/FY_2016_IPR_NOFO.pdf).

<sup>20</sup> Authorized by 6 U.S.C. §604.

<sup>21</sup> Authorized by 46 U.S.C. §70107.

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.fema.gov/national-preparedness-goal>.

<sup>23</sup> U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Fiscal Year 2016 Port Security Grant Program, Washington, DC, 2016, p. 2, [http://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/1455573875236-07cc03a778118ecc2ead8e1aac84185e/FY\\_2016\\_PSGP\\_NOFO\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/1455573875236-07cc03a778118ecc2ead8e1aac84185e/FY_2016_PSGP_NOFO_FINAL.pdf).

The Tribal Homeland Security Grant Program (THSGP)<sup>24</sup> are intended to increase tribal abilities to prevent, prepare for, protect against, and respond to acts of terrorism. Objectives of THSGP include advancing a whole community approach to security and emergency preparedness, and strengthening cooperation and coordination among local, regional, and state preparedness partners.<sup>25</sup> The Transit Security Grant Program<sup>26</sup> supports transportation infrastructure security activities. The program provides funds to owners and operators of transit systems—including intra-city bus, commuter bus, ferries, and all forms of passenger rail—to protect critical surface transportation infrastructure and the traveling public from acts of terrorism and to increase the resilience of transit infrastructure.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Authorized by 6 U.S.C. §606.

<sup>25</sup> U.S. Department of Homeland Security, FY 2016 Tribal Homeland Security Grant Program (THSGP), Washington, DC, 2016, p. 2, [http://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/1455574281533-97bc5a9e7780bf31d19a3bdb76a12699/FY\\_2016\\_THSGP\\_NOFO\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/1455574281533-97bc5a9e7780bf31d19a3bdb76a12699/FY_2016_THSGP_NOFO_FINAL.pdf).

<sup>26</sup> Authorized by 6 U.S.C. §1135.

<sup>27</sup> U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Fiscal Year 2016 Transit Security Grant Program, Washington, DC, 2016, p. 1, [http://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/1455574103426-a6ed21fef27d60aa6ae2a8048c6f4682/FY\\_2016\\_TSGP\\_NOFO.pdf](http://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/1455574103426-a6ed21fef27d60aa6ae2a8048c6f4682/FY_2016_TSGP_NOFO.pdf).

**WITNESS LIST**

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Mr. Tom Roberts  
Assistant Sheriff  
Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department

Mr. William Daroff  
Senior Vice President for Public Policy  
The Jewish Federations of North America

Mr. Michael Feinstein  
President and Chief Executive Officer  
Bender Jewish Community Center of Greater Washington



## **BUILDING A 21ST-CENTURY INFRASTRUCTURE FOR AMERICA: THE NATIONAL PREPAREDNESS SYSTEM**

**THURSDAY, MARCH 16, 2017**

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT,  
PUBLIC BUILDINGS, AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT,  
COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE,  
*Washington, DC.*

The subcommittee met, pursuant to call, at 10:05 a.m., in room 2167, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Lou Barletta (Chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Mr. BARLETTA. The subcommittee will come to order.

Before we begin, I ask unanimous consent that members not on the subcommittee be permitted to sit with the subcommittee at today's hearing and ask questions.

Welcome to our first subcommittee hearing of the 115th Congress. I would like to thank Chairman Shuster for giving me the opportunity to serve again as chairman of this subcommittee. Welcome to our new ranking member, Mr. Johnson, and welcome to the new and returning members of the subcommittee.

I look forward to building on our bipartisan record of accomplishment from the last two Congresses. Since 2013, we have saved \$3.4 billion on GSA projects, passed the Sandy Recovery Improvement Act, passed the Federal Assets Sale and Transfer Act, and continue to look for ways to drive down rising disaster costs and losses. These were major accomplishments, and I thank everyone who was involved in them.

This Congress, my two top priorities are public buildings reform and disaster legislation. I think that we can exceed the GSA savings from last Congress, and we have some important reforms to get across the finish line in the emergency management world. I hope we can have disaster legislation and a GSA reform bill ready for the committee to consider in the first half of this year.

The purpose of today's hearing is to look at the resources and investments that have gone into building the National Preparedness System, which was authorized 10 years ago in the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act.

Since 2013, more than \$47 billion in preparedness grant funding has been provided to State, Territorial, local, and Tribal governments to help reach the current level of national preparedness. This funding has helped these entities prepare to rebuild our infrastructure and communities when disasters strike.

The State Homeland Security Grant Program and the Urban Areas Security Initiative helped first responders prepare for potential acts of terrorism by supporting planning, training, and equipment needs. The Assistance to Firefighters Grant [AFG] program, including the SAFER [Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response] and Fire Prevention and Safety Grants, help fire departments improve their baseline emergency response capability.

The Emergency Management Performance Grant provides Federal funding to State and local governments for planning, training, exercises, and key emergency management personnel. Port Security Grant funds are used to secure and harden port facilities against the potential of a terror attack.

These grants play an important role in building and sustaining the National Preparedness System.

As a former mayor, I know all too well what it means to be a good neighbor and how critical help from your surrounding communities can be in times of emergency. No single community can handle every disaster on its own, and no community can afford all of the equipment and personnel to handle every disaster. These grants make it possible for mutual aid between communities and across our country.

For example, not every city can afford a Level 1 urban search and rescue team. In fact, if every city had a team, the teams wouldn't have enough resources and would receive insufficient training because already limited resources would be spread too thin. But during a big disaster, help pours in from all directions in a timely manner, and emergency managers make this possible. They get the right resources to the right place in the fastest time. Their actions save lives and property.

So we have to make sure that investments in the National Preparedness System are wise investments and that the taxpayer is getting the biggest bang for its buck. We also need to make sure that resources are being directed to where they are needed the most.

Over the past 15 years, we have made significant progress in improving the Nation's ability to prevent, protect against, mitigate, respond to, and recover from disasters, both natural and manmade.

But what work remains to be done? For example, I know many fire departments still lack the most basic requirements for a safe and effective response. Many firefighters still share personal protective equipment and gear. In addition, other fire departments are operating with severely outdated and sometimes inoperable equipment. The AFG and SAFER programs help local fire departments meet these critical needs.

In Pennsylvania, 97 percent of our fire departments are all or mostly volunteer. In my own district, the Freeland Fire Department was able to obtain a fire grant for 103 sets of personal protective equipment, replacing outdated equipment which does not meet the current safety standards. This equipment is essential for firefighters to do their job and to keep them safe. I also have another community trying to replace a 42-year-old fire engine. Without these grant funds, these communities would not be able to secure the needed equipment.

While we are talking about the firefighter community, please let me take 1 minute to recognize a devastating loss in Harrisburg. Last Friday, Lieutenant Dennis DeVoe of Mount Pleasant Fire Company No. 8 was killed by a drunk driver while trying to respond to a deadly house fire.

Mr. Martynuska, please carry our prayers and condolences back to the Pennsylvania firefighter community and to Lieutenant DeVoe's wife and four children.

I am also particularly concerned right now about the recent wave of bomb threats to Jewish community centers across our country. Over the last two decades, Jewish institutions have been the target of domestic terrorist attacks. The current threats are outrageous, and we must do more to protect these targeted institutions.

FEMA has been charged with the difficult task of developing and managing the many components that build the National Preparedness System, from the national preparedness goal, hazard, and risk assessments, State and Federal preparedness reports, and preparedness grants.

Today, we have brought together the key stakeholders that receive various preparedness funds to understand how they leverage this Federal investment to build national preparedness. These stakeholders represent our Nation's first responders and emergency managers. These are the people who work daily to build preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation capabilities to make our communities more resilient to vulnerabilities regardless of the cause.

I look forward to the conversations we will have today on the success our Nation has achieved and where we need to focus to continue to build a prepared 21st-century infrastructure. I thank you all for being here.

I now call on the ranking member of the subcommittee, Mr. Johnson, for a brief opening statement.

Mr. JOHNSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to thank the ranking member of the committee as well as my fellow committee members in allowing me to serve in this distinguished capacity as ranking member of this subcommittee. I am pleased to be here today, and I am excited to work with Chairman Barletta and others on the subcommittee to advance the important issues of emergency management as well as other issues over which we have jurisdiction.

Emergency preparedness and response are important issues that most take for granted until a disaster happens, and then suddenly there is a need for emergency services. Only then are we, many of us, reminded of the need for a substantive examination of what could have or should have occurred before the emergency or disaster happened.

It is reassuring to know that this committee is one of the few that proactively examines the issues and needs of our communities as well as our talented emergency managers and first responders who have to endure in the face of often tragic consequences.

A case in point: Earlier this year, two back-to-back tornadoes struck Georgia that caused substantial damage and forced hundreds into temporary housing shelters. Our first responders who lived in those same communities had to continue to do their jobs

even as their families, friends, and other loved ones, perhaps even unknowing to them, had been injured or rendered homeless.

This Congress, I look forward to advancing economic development issues across the Nation, especially in underperforming areas. While much of the country recovered economically and unemployment dropped to 4.6 percent under the Obama administration's policies, there are still pockets in the country that are hurting and in need of further economic development assistance.

The "2016 National Preparedness Report" assesses the Nation's achievement and identifies any gaps in meeting the 32 core capabilities identified in the national preparedness goals. The 2016 report found a few areas where State and local first responders have adequately met their goals but now need to focus on maintaining those capabilities. Moreover, the report found several areas where the Nation is lacking, such as recovery, and we need to ensure a sustained commitment to these areas.

This is important because the administration is proposing drastic cuts to FEMA's preparedness activities. The budget was released this morning, and now we are having the opportunity to ponder these drastic cuts and the skinny budget situation for ourselves.

Disasters will always occur, so we should be investing in pre-disaster mitigation to save lives, minimize damage, and speed up recovery. Reports have shown that for every dollar invested in pre-disaster mitigation we save \$3 to \$4 on the back end.

Despite needing more work, our emergency management system is recognized worldwide as being one of the best. Without sustained funding to maintain the capabilities that we have obtained and to focus on those capabilities that need improvement, we will fall behind.

I look forward to today's testimony, and I welcome our witnesses to this hearing on the National Preparedness System and the non-disaster grants used to develop core capabilities to ensure a robust and prepared Nation for all hazards.

Thank you, and I yield back.

Mr. BARLETTA. Thank you, Ranking Member Johnson.

At this time, I would like to recognize the chairman of the full committee, Mr. Shuster.

Mr. SHUSTER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for holding this hearing on national preparedness.

Don't let the number of Members here—not think this is a really important meeting. There is a Committee on the Budget hearing going on today, so that is where all the action is. If you saw the front page of the Washington Post, it is going to be an interesting several weeks here in Washington.

And I want to also say special thanks to the mayor of Baltimore, Mayor Pugh. Thank you for coming. I understand you have to give the State of the City Address today so you will be leaving before the end of this, but we really appreciate your input and your views on preparedness and all the things that FEMA does in the Federal Government and interacting with your city. So thank you for being here.

I think everything has already been said about FEMA, the details. And FEMA is extremely important to the national preparedness—preparing, coordinating, facilitating the Federal response in



disasters, whether manmade or natural. And in the last 15 years, FEMA has responded to almost 2,000 natural disasters and emergencies to rebuild our infrastructure in our communities.

There is little doubt, if you see what is on the front page of The Washington Post today, we need to rein in the budget. So we are going to have to take a close look at the President's proposal, but it will come in favor of making sure we tighten our belt, just like the city of Baltimore has to do at times, just like families across America have to do.

So we all have to look very hard and find out ways that we cut the fat but we don't cut the muscle, because that is incredibly important to us. But reducing the size and scope of Government is something we need to make sure we are focused on. And in these times of budgetary uncertainty, we need to prepare to do more with less. That is just the way it is sometimes to get our financial house in order.

However, FEMA and the National Preparedness System's role in keeping our vital infrastructure open and functioning in times of emergency cannot be understated. And we have to make sure—as I said, we will take a close look at the President's budget and see where those cuts are, especially when it comes to FEMA and national preparedness.

But we have to make sure we do everything—that FEMA has the resources so that when an unexpected natural disaster occurs, or a manmade event, that the resiliency of the infrastructure is there and that we keep America safe and competitive.

So, again, I appreciate all of you being here today, especially, Mayor, really appreciate you taking the time out of your day to do this, and look forward to hearing your testimony.

Thank you.

Mr. BARLETTA. Thank you.

We have assembled a panel of key stakeholders that represent various aspects of the preparedness system and the spectrum of grant uses.

The Honorable Catherine Pugh, the mayor of Baltimore, will be testifying on behalf of the United States Conference of Mayors.

Wendy Smith-Reeve, the director of the Arizona Department of Emergency and Military Affairs Emergency Management Division is here, representing the National Emergency Management Association.

Nick Crossley, the director of the Hamilton County, Ohio, Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency in Cincinnati, will bring testimony for the International Association of Emergency Managers and the National Association of Counties.

Welcome to Art Martynuska, the president of the Pennsylvania Professional Fire Fighters Association, who will be testifying for the International Association of Fire Fighters.

The Massachusetts Port Authority maritime security director, Joe Lawless, has joined us and will offer testimony on behalf of the American Association of Port Authorities.

We will also hear testimony from Mr. Tom Roberts, the assistant sheriff from the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department.

William Daroff is the senior vice president for public policy and director of the Washington office of the Jewish Federations of North America.

And welcome to Michael Feinstein, president and chief executive officer, Bender Jewish Community Center of Greater Washington.

I ask unanimous consent that our witnesses' full statements be included in the record. Without objection, so ordered.

For our witnesses, since your written testimony has been made a part of the record, the subcommittee would request that you limit your oral testimony to 5 minutes.

And as stated, I know Mayor Pugh has to get back for her State of the City Address and needs to leave early, so let's get started.

Mayor Pugh, please proceed.

**TESTIMONY OF HON. CATHERINE PUGH, MAYOR, CITY OF BALTIMORE, ON BEHALF OF THE UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF MAYORS; WENDY SMITH-REEVE, DIRECTOR, ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY AND MILITARY AFFAIRS DIVISION OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT, ON BEHALF OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION; NICK CROSSLEY, CEM, CPM, DIRECTOR, EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AND HOMELAND SECURITY AGENCY OF HAMILTON COUNTY, OHIO, ON BEHALF OF THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF EMERGENCY MANAGERS AND THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES; JOSEPH LAWLESS, DIRECTOR OF MARITIME SECURITY, MASSACHUSETTS PORT AUTHORITY, ON BEHALF OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF PORT AUTHORITIES; ART MARTYNUSKA, PRESIDENT, PENNSYLVANIA PROFESSIONAL FIRE FIGHTERS ASSOCIATION, ON BEHALF OF THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIRE FIGHTERS; THOMAS ROBERTS, ASSISTANT SHERIFF, LAS VEGAS METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT; WILLIAM DAROFF, SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT FOR PUBLIC POLICY AND DIRECTOR, WASHINGTON OFFICE, THE JEWISH FEDERATIONS OF NORTH AMERICA; AND MICHAEL FEINSTEIN, PRESIDENT AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, BENDER JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER OF GREATER WASHINGTON**

Mayor PUGH. First, let me say, Chairman Barletta, thank you and the Ranking Member Johnson and the members of this committee. I am Catherine Pugh. I am the mayor of Baltimore, and believe it or not, this is my 100th day as the mayor of the city of Baltimore.

I did have the honor, by the way, to meet President Trump when he was President-elect when he came over to Baltimore to our Army-Navy game, and I want you to know that the letter that I handed him and the conversation that I had was around our infrastructure needs in our city.

And as you well know, we are pleased that this subcommittee is led by you, two veterans of local government. Chairman Barletta, we especially appreciate the opportunity to discuss these issues with you, as a former mayor. I am a relatively new mayor, but my colleagues tell me, once a mayor—as you, I am sure, feel—always a mayor. And we expect that Ranking Member Johnson, as a former DeKalb County commissioner who is married to a current

one, will also understand our perspective on these issues. It is the local first responders who are first on the scene when an event occurs and local officials who manage the response.

My basic message today is that mayors of all of our cities, local officials across this Nation strongly support the existing menu of preparedness programs. I understand what you say in terms of cutting the fat, but I can tell you that in urban environments you will find very little fat. They are working and have improved our capabilities. Particularly important is the incentives they provide for Federal, Tribal, State, Territorial, and local jurisdictions to work together.

There have been cuts in the funding available through several key programs in recent years, and we are alarmed by the additional cuts which we know, by the release of today's budget, are coming. These funding reductions have had and will have a significant impact on our ability to sustain and enhance capabilities in Baltimore and in cities across the Nation at a time when we see an increase in the number and intensity of natural disasters and an increase in violent extremism and incidents of terrorism.

And let me just add that when you are surrounded by water—so I was so glad to see the Representative from Boston here, because we have a lot in common. The April 15, 2013, bombing at the Boston Marathon continues to provide an excellent example of how DHS investments, provided through the Urban Areas Security Initiative program, have really paid off. There can be no doubt that they contributed significantly to the Boston area's quick and effective response to this horrific act of terrorism.

Since 2003, the Baltimore UASI has invested tens of millions of dollars in preparedness initiatives that have benefited our city and our region. Recent and expected further funding cuts, however, are severely affecting our ability to maintain and build on these investments and cut across law enforcement, fire, health and human services, information technology, and the many other public safety services we rely on every day.

And I was listening to you, Chairman Barletta, when you talked about the fact that fires occur and people die, and I am reminded of six babies who died in a recent fire in Baltimore. And much of the equipment that we need we just don't have, and we need more.

For over 10 years, the city of Baltimore has led the efforts of regional Maryland Task Force 2 urban search and rescue teams, which can respond to regional, State, and national disasters, earthquakes, hurricanes, widespread tornadoes, and manmade and terrorist events within 2 hours.

The Emergency Management Performance Grant and other preparedness grant programs have been essential to the staffing and operations of our Office of Emergency Management.

I actually got a chance to spend all day—because we didn't know whether we were going to get the 9 inches of snow or the 2 inches of snow—in our Office of Emergency Services just to see how well it works but, more importantly, how all of us come together to make sure that we can respond to any emergencies in our city.

Unfortunately, due to this drastic funding cut, the city of Baltimore and Baltimore UASI funding to maintain support and enhance our team was eliminated. I must say that we appreciate the

work which this committee has done to strengthen the urban search and rescue program, and I am sure you share our concerns on the impact of these cuts on our team in Baltimore.

Based on our experience with the National Preparedness System, America's mayors recommend the following:

We urge Congress to resist further cuts in preparedness and other homeland security programs. We urge you to continue to resist any attempts to consolidate homeland security grants. And I say that because many of our cities survive in different environments, whether we are surrounded by water or surrounded by land or have massive transportation systems or none at all. All of us count on these kinds of grants.

We suggest that any program reform or change be consistent with the following principles developed by the U.S. Conference of Mayors and other organizations which represent local governments, first responders, and emergency managers: increase transparency, and we are all for that; increase local involvement; provide flexibility with accountability; protect local funding; sustain terrorism prevention; provide incentives for metropolitan area regionalization.

And I can tell you that, as a former State senator who has a great relationship with her counterparts in both Baltimore County and Prince George's County—and I think about my Harford County executive, who was my best friend, who happens to be a Republican, but, however, we were best friends and runners both in the Senate, who I cheered on to become a member of my committee, is now the Harford County executive. And my Howard County executive, who also—we, all three of us, served on the same committee. So we know that regionalism is important and that we can work together.

We believe that the FEMA Administrator should have emergency management experience at the local level. While we understand the need to reduce costs, we want you to know that we have significant concerns with the disaster deductible concept that FEMA has proposed.

I appreciate this opportunity to testify before you today on this issue of vital importance to me, my city, and my region and to mayors and other local officials across the Nation. The U.S. Conference of Mayors looks forward to working with you to continue to strengthen the National Preparedness System.

Thank you so much for this opportunity.

Mr. BARLETTA. Yeah, and thank you for your testimony. And I understand what you went through trying to remove the snow. I left my hometown yesterday, where they had 30 inches of snow.

Mayor PUGH. Wow.

Mr. BARLETTA. So I am very happy I am not the mayor today.

Mayor PUGH. I am sure you are.

Mr. BARLETTA. But, you know, there is a perfect example, where I had a conference call with the mayor and State officials, and, you know, they just had received a call—the police chief said they had just received a call where a woman was stuck in her home. She needed her dialysis treatment, and there was no way to get her out, with all the snow, whether the National Guard had to come

in—but these are the situations that you deal with every day. So thank you—

Mayor PUGH. So you can imagine, your 30 inches of snow would be like 9 inches in Baltimore.

Mr. BARLETTA. Yeah. Right.

Mayor PUGH. And so we had to make sure all the seniors had food. We had to make sure that all of our centers were open to take care of the homelessness. So all of these things are important to us.

Mr. BARLETTA. And there is very little money in your budget to deal with that.

Mayor PUGH. Very little. Very little.

Mr. BARLETTA. Thank you for your work.

Mayor PUGH. Thank you so much. I appreciate it.

Mr. BARLETTA. Thank you.

Ms. Smith-Reeve, you may proceed.

Ms. SMITH-REEVE. Thank you so much.

It is probably not a good time to just note that I came from 90-degree weather. We have had snowstorms in the past, and I understand the complexities associated with that. And just like any other natural disaster, we all have to work together to ensure that we support and assist our community.

So good morning and thank you, Chairman Barletta, Ranking Member Johnson, and distinguished members of the subcommittee, for allowing me to testify before you today to discuss the role of the National Preparedness System in building and supporting a strong 21st-century infrastructure for America.

My name is Wendy Smith-Reeve. I am the director for the Arizona Department of Emergency and Military Affairs Division of Emergency Management, and I also serve as the president of the National Emergency Management Association. NEMA represents the State emergency management directors of all 50 States, 8 territories, and the District of Columbia.

“Presidential Policy Directive 8: National Preparedness” recognizes that preparedness is a shared responsibility. At its core, this directive requires the involvement of the whole community in a systematic effort to keep the Nation safe from harm and resilient when struck by hazards such as natural disasters, acts of terrorism, and pandemics.

The foundation of the National Preparedness System is the Threat Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment process, known as THIRA. While not perfect, we believe THIRA and the larger National Preparedness System structure has provided a baseline against which we can now measure progress towards a common goal.

Improvements and tweaks will always be needed to ensure the process represents and incorporates the best available data and measures key indicators that communicate the gaps that exist and progress made over time. This reality must be balanced, however, with the need for change to improve outcomes and not succumb to the interest in change for the sake of change that could set us back years.

The implementation tool for the critical functions of the National Preparedness System is the suite of preparedness grants adminis-

tered by FEMA that are essential to State, Tribal, county, and local governments.

From what we understand based on preliminary details from the fiscal year 2018 budget blueprint, significant cuts may be proposed to some preparedness grants, including the Emergency Management Performance Grant and the State Homeland Security Grant Programs. It is impossible to imagine a scenario in which these cuts, as significant as they are, do not, over time, affect and erode the operational capabilities at the State, Tribal, county, and local levels.

These proposed cuts are not reflective of our homeland's current threat environment. The threat of terror attacks here in the United States continues to evolve and increase, and communities in every State face the ever-changing and emerging threats from natural disasters.

FEMA's all-hazards focus allows capabilities to be built and utilized in a number of various events, ranging from wildfires in the West, Hurricane Matthew in the East, and response to terror events in Chattanooga, Fort Hood, Boston, and San Bernardino. 2016 included a range of hazards which resulted in 53 emergency and major disaster declarations by the President and 47,778 events that were resolved through the thriving emergency management system that exists at the State, county, and local and Tribal levels.

Capabilities afforded through EMPG contributed to the ability of those events to be managed without additional Federal expenditures. By proposing significant cuts for fiscal year 2018, our investments since the inception of these grants are at risk and may actually increase costs to the Federal Government if more events begin to exceed State and local capabilities as a direct result of our inability to maintain pace with our ever-changing environment.

Declining budgets at all levels of Government have increased the need to leverage resources and facilitate cross-jurisdictional coordination. We can no longer afford to operate in separate silos. We cannot divorce declining budgets from the structure that facilitates grant allocation.

Today's dynamic threat environment requires a grant program that prioritizes investments based on risk while maintaining our collective ability to sustain prior investments that support national goals.

Building a 21st-century National Preparedness System should also acknowledge that the Federal Government's response to disaster needs to be analyzed and streamlined to reduce redundancy, bureaucracy, and unneeded overhead and administrative expense. Together, let's analyze and eliminate redundancies and conflicts and get back to a streamlined and synchronized effort that serves and supports all parties.

FEMA was originally created with the intent to serve and support communities impacted by disaster as the single coordinating body for Federal assistance. This is no longer the model that we have today. It is important to acknowledge that increasing the Nation's preparedness and response capabilities for the 21st century requires a strong National Preparedness System that facilitates the necessary collaboration, coordination, and structure for all critical stakeholders to achieve a common goal.

If national systems are robust and implemented effectively, State, Tribal, county, and local governments can then make the tough decisions on how best to prioritize investment of critical grant dollars. Decisions regarding where to spend declining grant dollars are best made by those with firsthand knowledge of the threats facing their States and communities around the country.

On behalf of the State of Arizona and NEMA members nationwide, we appreciate the continued support of this subcommittee as we work together to ensure that, as a Nation, we sustain a strong National Preparedness System.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony, and I look forward to the questions any of the subcommittee members may have.

Mr. BARLETTA. Thank you for your testimony.

Mr. Crossley, you may proceed.

Mr. CROSSLEY. Good morning, Chairman Barletta, Ranking Member Johnson, and members of the subcommittee. My name is Nick Crossley, and I am the director of the Hamilton County (Ohio) Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency.

I appear before you today in my dual roles as first vice president of the International Association of Emergency Managers and as a member of the National Association of Counties. I am here today as a representative of not just these organizations but the entire profession of emergency management practitioners—the profession dedicated to protecting America’s local communities from all hazards and threats, natural and manmade.

Chairman Barletta, in your home county of Luzerne, Pennsylvania, Emergency Management Director Lucille Morgan spends most of her waking hours preparing for floods along the Susquehanna River, a recurring problem she has helped to manage multiple times during her 24-year career with the county’s emergency management agency.

Congressman Johnson, in DeKalb County, Georgia, Emergency Management Director Sue Loeffler is tasked with preparing for disasters in close proximity to the busiest airport in the world and the headquarters of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Sue works daily not just to help ensure the safe transport of various biohazards, including the Ebola virus, to and from CDC headquarters but also to prepare the community’s response to accidental introduction of these lethal biohazards in the community.

Across America, local emergency management agencies are at the center of our Nation’s preparation, response, and recovery and strive to create a culture of preparedness that builds and sustains a disaster-resistant and disaster-resilient homeland.

We are grateful to be part of today’s conversation, because the mission we pursue daily is closely aligned with the goals of the National Preparedness System. In fact, over the last decade, the National Preparedness System and specifically its Emergency Management Performance Grant, or EMPG, have become pivotal pillars of support for efficient and effective local emergency management.

Through EMPG, the Federal Government supports ongoing efforts to develop, evaluate, implement, and administer emergency operations plans, trainings, and exercises in a manner that best

suits the needs of each community and is conducive to interagency collaboration.

Since Federal EMPG funds are always met with a 50/50 match from State and local recipients, the program is truly a partnership between local, State, and Federal governments. By fostering this partnership, EMPG not only helps us protect our own communities, it enables emergency management agencies to support and assist each other when disasters strain our individual capacities.

EMPG also helps States coordinate the support and assistance among counties, both within and across State lines, ultimately creating a nationwide emergency management support structure that helps to save lives and lessen the impact of disasters.

Over the last decade, this structure of support and assistance has strengthened our Nation's response to disaster in a measurable and documented manner. To cite one example, after Superstorm Sandy struck in 2012, Ramsey County, Minnesota, sent emergency management practitioners trained under EMPG to the State of New York to reinforce the efforts of overwhelmed emergency management agencies. Without EMPG, this sort of interstate coordination and assistance simply would not have happened, and the short- and long-term impact of the storm on New York and on our country would have been far greater.

This is EMPG in action, increasing our Nation's resiliency to disaster by fostering a structure of emergency management coordination, support, and assistance that crosses local and State lines.

A weakened EMPG program would not only result in greater damage to life, property, and infrastructure when disaster strikes, it would also substantially increase the need for post-disaster aid from the Federal Government. Because of this, cuts to EMPG are shortsighted from a budgetary standpoint and counterproductive to the goals of the National Preparedness System.

In conclusion, the Emergency Management Performance Grant advances the goals of the National Preparedness System by fostering partnerships between emergency management practitioners at all levels of Government and in all corners of the country. When disasters strike our communities, these partnerships help to save lives, mitigate damage to property and infrastructure, and accelerate recovery.

Thank you, Chairman Barletta and members of the subcommittee, for this opportunity to testify, and I look forward to your questions.

Mr. BARLETTA. Thank you for your testimony.

Mr. LAWLESS, you may begin.

Mr. LAWLESS. Good morning. Thank you, Chairman Barletta, Ranking Member Johnson, for convening this important and timely hearing.

My name is Joseph Lawless. I am the director of maritime security at the Massachusetts Port Authority. I am also the police chief at the port authority. And I am here today on behalf of the American Association of Port Authorities, where I am the chairman of the Security Committee.

Since 9/11, port security remains a top priority for U.S. ports. Safe and secure seaport facilities are fundamental to protecting our borders and moving goods. Protecting the people and freight that



move through seaports in surrounding communities is essential to keeping seaports safe and open for business. With 98 percent of overseas trade flowing through U.S. ports, a terrorist incident at a port could have a drastic impact on the U.S. economy.

A key component of our Nation's preparedness system has been the Port Security Grant Program. Since 2002, over \$3 billion in port security grants have been appropriated. This is a vital funding source for port authorities and our partners to pay for unfunded mandates that have been put in place since 9/11.

The AAPA is very concerned about the rumored budget cuts to the Port Security Grant in the administration's budget that was released today. A 40-percent cut to the Port Security Grant Program would have a devastating and cascading impact on our security, supply chain, and safety of our communities.

Under the SAFE Port Act, this program was authorized at \$400 million. Unfortunately, the funding for this program has decreased, currently standing at a dangerously low level of \$100 million. As costs of systems, maintenance, and equipment continue to rise and security threats continue to evolve, this level of funding will bring into question the sustainability of the protection levels we have worked so hard to build over the last 15 years.

Port Security Grant funds have helped port facilities and port areas to strengthen facility security and work in partnership with other agencies to enhance the security of the region. Port Security Grant funding has been used to procure equipment such as vessels, vehicles; install detection systems such as cameras and sensors; and provide equipment and maintenance for systems recently installed. It also provides funding for 24-by-7 response and patrols.

For example, at my port, the Port of Boston, we used Port Security Grant funds to bolster our critical infrastructure by obtaining and installing radar intrusion detection systems, cameras, biometric access control and identification systems, active-shooter detection systems, and cybersecurity assessment tools. We even enhanced our emergency management and response capabilities by equipping our bomb squads with explosive ordnance disposal robots, advanced x-ray systems, bomb containment vessels, and preventative radiological and nuclear detection devices.

As chairman of the AAPA Security Committee, I know that ports around the country have also utilized these funds to confront the multitude of physical and cybersecurity vulnerabilities that challenge the vitality of the maritime transportation network.

At the Port of Los Angeles, for example, Port Security Grant funding has gone to installing over 400 cameras and 250 access control panels, including an infrared camera capable of viewing objects 3 miles from the port of entry; building a cybersecurity operation center to monitor and respond to over 550,000 monthly internet attacks on the port's business network.

In Florida, the Tampa Port Authority have used Port Security Grants to purchase an innovative floating barrier system that was designed and manufactured in Florida. The system is designed to prevent a waterborne attack by a small vessel carrying an improvised explosive device. This system can be deployed in less than an hour by port security and law enforcement personnel, as compared

to the traditional systems deployed by contractors; they take hours or days to set up.

Channels under the jurisdiction of the port authority are used to deliver over 43 percent of all motor vehicle fuel used by Florida citizens and visitors. This investment has the potential to protect high-value targets against evolving threats of improvised water-borne explosives carried by small vessels.

Security challenges are never stagnant. Cybersecurity is a prime example of an emerging security threat since 9/11. Ports are working with their stakeholders in addressing this very complex problem. And the Port Security Grant Program remains a vital component in assisting ports in addressing cybersecurity challenges by providing resources for cyber assessments.

If Congress were to make tweaks to the FEMA Port Security Grant Program, as has been discussed by other committees of jurisdiction, we would recommend the following: Fund and authorize the Port Security Grant Program at the \$400 million level or maintain the current \$100 million level; increase the \$100 million project limit to a \$500 million per-project limit.

And increasing the limit on cost eligible for funding would address the cost of acquisition and installation as well as the sustainment and maintenance of security equipment and systems that have increased since the authorization of 2005. This would address most of the multiyear funding issues that have been raised in the past as well.

A 36-month grant performance period is the minimum needed for ports to successfully design, implement, and test projects to ensure maximum improvements to port security and operational capability.

We encourage Congress to continue to emphasize a risk-based funding strategy for Port Security Grants. The Port Security Grant Program funding should be focused on the highest risk ports in the Nation in terms of consequence, vulnerability, and economic impact.

Reduce or eliminate the 25-percent cost match required for Government entities, such as port authorities, police departments, and fire agencies.

And keep the Port Security Grant Program where it is. Do not block-grant or consolidate this program. FEMA has done an excellent job in administering this program.

Port Security Grants are managed quite differently than other homeland security grants. Priorities are set locally based on risk and vulnerability at the local port. Other homeland security grants have a list of core capabilities which all grantees try to attain. This capability list is based more on a movable and shared asset rather than set facilities. There is no such list of core capabilities for Port Security Grants, and the ones developed for other grant programs were not developed with ports in mind.

Additionally, ports have certain Federal mandates, such as the transportation worker ID card, or the TWIC program, and the recently released TWIC reader rule, which goes into effect this coming year.

Additionally, I would be remiss if I did not state that funding Customs and Border Protection and ensuring that ports are staffed

with a sufficient level of Customs and Border Protection officers is critical for a safe and secure supply chain. CBP officers augment everything that the Port Security Grant program does.

In fiscal year 2015, when Customs and Border Protection was funded to hire 2,000 staff, fewer than 20 officers were assigned to the seaports. We cannot let this disproportionate approach to security continue. Our Nation's seaports handle more than 11 million maritime containers and over 11 million international passengers each year.

Finally, we have made a remarkable, well-prepared industry when it comes to security. As a security professional, we value the partnerships. We leverage funding and keep security as a priority. The FEMA Port Security Grant Program has been vital in keeping our ports and supply chains and communities safe.

I want to thank you for giving me this opportunity to testify today, and I look forward to any questions that you may have.

Mr. BARLETTA. Thank you for your testimony.

Mr. Martynuska, you can begin.

Mr. MARTYNUSKA. Thank you, Chairman Barletta, Ranking Member Johnson, and members of the subcommittee.

Before I start my comments, Chairman Barletta, I want to thank you for your kind words of condolences for my brother Denny DeVoe, and I will make sure to pass those along to all of his brothers in Harrisburg. Thank you.

My name is Art Martynuska. I am the president of the Pennsylvania Professional Fire Fighters Association. I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you today on behalf of the International Association of Fire Fighters, representing over 300,000 firefighters and emergency medical personnel.

Today's fire service has evolved from a municipal force whose primary duty was to extinguish local fires to a highly integrated national system that responds to a wide range of local emergencies and national disasters. When the Nation faces any type of emergency, it is local firefighters who respond. It is from this unique perspective that we view the Federal Government's preparedness efforts.

The horrific events of September 11, 2001, shook our Nation to the core, and Congress responded appropriately by creating the Department of Homeland Security and establishing new programs to protect the Nation.

These laws fundamentally altered the way our Nation views emergency response and preparedness.

Before 9/11, the Federal role in emergency management was largely confined to recovery after a major disaster. September 11th forced us to face the deficiencies of this outmoded view and create a new paradigm among Federal, State, and local governments to better protect our communities. Under this partnership, local emergency responders came to understand that their job is not merely protecting communities from local incidents but to play an integral role in protecting all Americans against terrorist attacks and other major disasters.

The Federal Government's role in this new partnership is two-fold. First, it must be able to marshal all available resources, including the assets offered by the Nation's fire services, to respond

to these events. And, second, to fulfill this obligation, the Federal Government must be willing to ensure that local emergency response agencies have the resources they need to successfully execute their missions.

To successfully mitigate a broad palette of operational responsibilities, the fire service must maintain a continuous state of preparedness. Unfortunately, firefighters are too often expected to work with outdated equipment, minimal training, and insufficient personnel.

The SAFER and Assistance to Firefighters Grant programs were created by Congress to help address these needs and keep firefighters and fire departments in an ever-ready state of preparedness. Providing funds to communities nationwide, SAFER and Assistance to Firefighters Grant programs have proven to be highly effective.

For example, the Philadelphia Fire Department has struggled for years with a depleted fire force. In 2015, I am pleased to say that the Philadelphia Fire Department received a SAFER Grant for \$22.6 million, allowing the department to add 160 firefighters to the depleted rolls, enhancing safety and significantly reducing risk.

Despite the clear improvements in preparedness produced by these grants, there remains a strong need for additional funding. According to the National Fire Protection Association, shortages in personnel, equipment, and training persist in many fire departments. Although SAFER and Assistance to Firefighters Grant programs have allowed fire departments to make headway against longstanding shortages, many departments are swimming against a rising tide.

In addition to SAFER and Assistance to Firefighters Grant programs, we believe the homeland security grants, particularly the Urban Areas Security Initiative and the State Homeland Security Grant Program, have benefited the Nation's preparedness.

Although these programs serve an important public safety need, shrinking budgets limit their effectiveness. We are concerned with this trend and warn that, if continued, it will have a significant impact on preparedness.

Additionally, the previous administration proposed consolidating homeland security grants. We rejected this proposal, as did Congress. Given the limited Federal funding afforded to the grants, merging district homeland security priorities into a single block grant could cause such priorities to go unserved. We hope this proposal is not resurrected under the current administration and urge it be rejected again if it is.

As you know, the National Urban Search and Rescue Response System provides a significant national resource for search and rescue assistance in the wake of a major disaster. USAR teams have been deployed to numerous disasters in the United States, including Superstorm Sandy, Hurricane Katrina, and, of course, the 9/11 attacks.

I know this subcommittee values the significant work of our Nation's USAR teams, and I would be remiss if I did not thank you for your work last year to pass the National Urban Search and Rescue Response System Act. This legislation is a significant

achievement by this subcommittee, and we appreciate your tireless efforts that resulted in this bill becoming law.

Unfortunately, the USAR system is desperately underfunded and becomes more so each year. In 2006, FEMA estimated the annual recurring cost for each task force to be \$1.7 million. Today, in many jurisdictions, the cost exceeds \$2 million. For fiscal year 2016, Congress only appropriated a portion of the necessary cost for all 28 teams, leaving local sponsoring agencies to pick up the remainder of the tab.

Unfortunately, tight local budgets have left many local sponsoring agencies unable to subsidize critical USAR functions, significantly straining task forces' readiness and capabilities. In fact, some teams have been so underfunded that they have been unable to respond to emergencies when called upon.

Additionally, when local communities are forced to assume an ever-increasing share of costs, funds are inevitably diverted from local emergency service budgets. Thus, a failure to fund an inherently Federal function actually detracts from local preparedness.

Adequately funding the Urban Search and Rescue Response System would significantly improve our Nation's readiness. A small investment would yield significant returns in ensuring that teams are prepared to conduct critical, lifesaving search and rescue operations in the wake of a disaster.

These programs allow all the Federal Government to enhance preparedness at both the local and national level. That is why we are concerned with reports that funding for homeland security grants and other priorities within DHS may be cut under the new administration's budget. As the first line of defense in protecting our homeland, the Federal Government has an inherent responsibility to help ensure local fire departments can effectively protect the public safety. Cutting these essential programs would surely result in critical gaps in the firefighters' ability to respond to emergencies.

I appreciate the opportunity to share with you our views on the National Preparedness System. We have made significant progress since 9/11 to enhance readiness and capabilities. We must continue to build upon this framework and resist suggestions to cut or underfund programs that are essential to our national security and well-being.

Again, thank you for the subcommittee's opportunity to have me testify here today, and I will be happy to answer any questions.

Mr. BARLETTA. Thank you, Mr. Martynuska.

Mr. Roberts.

If I could remind the panel to try to stay within the 5 minutes. We have a large panel and some questions we want to get to.

But thank you very much.

Mr. ROBERTS. Yes, sir, Mr. Chairman.

Good morning, Chairman Barletta and Ranking Member Johnson and distinguished members of the committee. Thank you for the opportunity to share my agency's views on the importance of FEMA preparedness grants in securing Las Vegas.

My name is Tom Roberts. I am an assistant sheriff with the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department. I currently oversee the Law

Enforcement Investigations and Support Group and have been in law enforcement for over 30 years.

Metro is the largest law enforcement agency in the State of Nevada, with over 3,000 sworn members, and we serve a population of 2 million permanent residents and 42 million visitors each year. It is one of the largest police agencies in the United States. We are also a member of two important professional law enforcement organizations: the Major County Sheriffs of America and the Major Cities Chiefs Association.

With the ever-changing threat environment, the capabilities built in part through UASI and State homeland funds have become critical in our preparedness for our efforts to prevent threats to public safety. These capabilities are consistently supported by our local governments and our State. And the Federal contribution to those efforts is small in comparison but is essential to maintain the level of vigilance against threats.

One of our major accomplishments made possible by the State homeland UASI grants is the development and sustainment of the Southern Nevada Counter-Terrorism Center, our State-designated fusion center.

And, Chairman Barletta, I would like to thank you for your support for fusion centers across the country, to include ours.

Metro does not source any grant funding for full-time employee positions or overtime reimbursement. Staff assigned to the fusion center are contributed by each partner agency at their own expense.

The mission of the SNCTC is to combat crime and terrorism in Nevada by ensuring communication and coordination among Federal, State, local, Tribal, international, and private-sector agencies. The fusion center links homeland security stakeholders in southern Nevada through information sharing and analysis.

Within the SNCTC are several successful programs supported in part by investments of both Homeland Security and UASI funding, whether technology, equipment, or training.

The SNCTC participates in a nationwide suspicious activity reporting, SAR, initiative, which is the cornerstone of the National Network of Fusion Centers. The initiative provides law enforcement at all levels with the ability to detect and prevent terrorism and other criminal activity while strictly abiding by privacy, civil liberties, and civil rights protections.

The counterterrorism section is comprised of law enforcement detectives throughout the Las Vegas Valley. It is a true actionable arm of the fusion center. They are a 24/7 operation that runs 7 days a week, day or night, to ensure that nothing is missed and that our community remains ever vigilant in the fight against terrorism.

We use grant dollars to support Silver Shield, which is Nevada's critical infrastructure protection program and implements the National Infrastructure Protection Plan, NIPP, in our area. Having initially formed with a mandate to conduct physical security assessments in critical infrastructure and key resource sites, the program has evolved to identify and prioritize and assess risk regarding infrastructure, assets, systems, networks, and functions that

are critical to the State's economic security as well as public health and safety.

The UASI program, while critical and effective, needs to be strengthened to keep pace with the current threat environment and to fulfill its original intent. In any given year, high-risk and high-consequence areas like Las Vegas are left out of UASI grant allocation. There needs to be a reevaluation of the MSA risk formula to accurately reflect a true count of approved critical infrastructure locations within the MSA by taking into consideration the clustering of critical infrastructure and key resources.

Special events need to be factored into the calculation on how cities are targeted. No one does special events like Las Vegas, and taken DHS special event assessment rating listings only increase the true account of the risk to the MSA risk profile.

We would like to see FEMA provide clear guidance as to what contributes to the threat category within the MSA process instead of the existing process, which in some cases does not appear to be accountable.

There remains a strong need for law enforcement terrorism prevention activities, LETPA, a requirement that is current law under provisions. Twenty-five percent of all UASI and State Homeland Security Grant funds that are received by a State must be used for prevention activities. If this requirement was removed or otherwise watered down, there would be zero dedicated Federal support for terrorism prevention activities, which is a unique role in law enforcement. It would significantly reduce the amount of funding available to support our fusion center and true counterterrorism efforts.

On a related note, we believe there should be more formal local law enforcement input into FEMA's grant guidance and prioritization process to ensure transparency in its policy directives, grant guidance, and risk formulas.

I want to thank the committee and all the staff for your hard work and willingness to engage local law enforcement. As you can see, we have built very important capabilities with these programs, and we look forward to working with you to protect them.

I look forward to any of your questions. Thank you.

Mr. BARLETTA. Thank you, Mr. Roberts, for your testimony.

Mr. Daroff, you may begin.

Mr. DAROFF. Good morning, Chairman Barletta, Ranking Member Johnson, and members of the committee. Thank you for inviting me to participate in today's hearing. It is an honor to be here today.

My name is William Daroff. I am the senior vice president for public policy and director of the Washington office of the Jewish Federations of North America. I take note of my colleague Robert Goldberg and my wife, Heidi, who are here with me today.

JFNA and our 148 Jewish federations across the country are collectively among the top 10 charities in the Nation. Since September 11, nonprofits in general and Jewish communal institutions in particular, have been targeted by international terrorist organizations and homegrown violent extremists from across the ideological spectrum. As a consequence, Jewish communal security, and that of the

nonprofit sector more generally, has great relevance to the National Preparedness System.

In August of 2016, the National Counterterrorism Center reported that homegrown violent extremists are increasingly favoring softer civilian targets, including Jewish houses of worship, because they are perceived to have lower levels of security and because they are being encouraged directly by overseas violent extremists such as ISIL.

In February, the Southern Poverty Law Center reported that the number of hate groups in the United States rose in 2016 from 892 to 917 and that the majority of these groups are anti-Semitic. Since January 1st, at least 116 Jewish communal institutions, including Jewish community centers, Jewish day schools, places of worship, and others, have received more than 160 bomb threats in 39 States. Again, that is just since January 1st of this year. And I would note that those threats have occurred in each of the States that are represented by the members of the committee who are present here today.

In fiscal year 2005, in response to terrorist and extremist threats, Congress with bipartisan support created the Nonprofit Security Grant Program. The program supports the acquisition and installation of physical target hardening investments to protect against threats identified as of particular concern to at-risk nonprofit institutions, including protection against explosive devices, arson, active shooters, assassination, kidnapping, chemical and biological agents, and cyber attacks.

Prior to the establishment of the NSGP program, there was no committed, coordinated, uniform, centralized program that responded to, promoted, or ensured that at-risk nonprofit institutions participated in and benefited from meaningful Federal, State, and local security efforts. The NSGP program changed this.

The NSGP program awards protect against threats and mitigate the effects of attacks, including the installation of access controls, barriers, blast-proofing, monitoring and surveillance capabilities, and cybersecurity enhancements. These are similar in nature to the physical security enhancements acquired and installed at Federal Government buildings in the post-9/11 environment, such as those protecting the Capitol and this very building we are in this morning.

The program is competitive and risk-based. It involves State and local review and prioritization, followed by Federal review and final determination by DHS. The program applies the same geographic limitations as FEMA's Urban Areas Security Initiative, which, as of fiscal year 2016, included 29 urban areas in 20 specified States and the District of Columbia.

The Nonprofit Security Grant Program has become an essential component of the preparedness grant programs at FEMA. It maintains bipartisan support in both the House and the Senate and is thought of as an efficient and effective means to accomplish a great deal of security enhancement and preparedness using modest resources. With a continuing and growing record of threats, attempted attacks, and deadly occurrences targeting Jewish communal institutions, as well as to other vulnerable populations within the nonprofit sector, we believe there is ample justification for



Congress to maintain the Nonprofit Security Grant Program as a singular, standalone initiative as a matter of national security preparedness. Congress should consider ways to strengthen the program, not to dismantle it.

Conversely, we strongly believe that any effort to supplant the NSGP program as part of the consolidation of larger preparedness grant programs would disenfranchise at-risk nonprofit stakeholders, who could not be expected to meaningfully participate in or effectively compete with larger, more formidable and connected stakeholders for resources in an integrated, competitive process. Such a move would dilute the connectivity and continuity between local nonprofit stakeholders and the State Administrative Agencies, and between FEMA and national nonprofit stakeholders, such as JFNA.

Rather, in addition to maintaining the integrity of the NSGP program in its current form, we know that the threats to our communal institutions have expanded geographically to smaller and more diffuse communities located outside of the enumerated UASI areas. As such, we believe there is need for Congress to take immediate action to further strengthen the integration of nonprofit preparedness within State and local preparedness activities. To this end, we would welcome the subcommittee exploring other opportunities to build nonprofit security capabilities through the National Preparedness System.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today on the importance of the Nonprofit Security Grant Program as a standalone initiative, and the imperative to strengthen the ability and increase opportunities for further integration of nonprofit preparedness within the National Preparedness System. I look forward to the opportunity to answer questions.

Mr. BARLETTA. Thank you for your testimony.

Mr. Feinstein, you may proceed.

Mr. FEINSTEIN. Thank you, Chairman Barletta, Ranking Member Johnson, and members of the subcommittee, for the opportunity to testify today regarding FEMA's Nonprofit Security Grant Program. My name is Michael Feinstein, and I am the president and chief executive officer of the Bender JCC located in Rockville, Maryland.

The Bender JCC is a warm, inclusive, diverse, and thriving community that welcomes everyone to participate in our programs: people of all backgrounds, faiths, ethnicities, abilities, and sexual orientations. We serve a cross section of the area's population, from young mothers with infants to seniors who are 100 years old. Tens of thousands of people participate in our cultural, educational, recreational, social, and safety net programs annually.

Daily, there are over 400 children in our preschool, afterschool, and enrichment programs. And in the summer, over 500 children and 250 counselors participate in our inclusive day camp with about 100 of these children having some type of disability.

We provide arts and culture programs, lectures, fitness and aquatics classes, and Jewish festivals and holiday celebrations to the broad community. We help seniors age in place through a hot lunch and social program and a community-based Parkinson's wellness initiative in partnership with Georgetown University Medical Center. And we serve as a resource to the entire commu-

nity by providing meeting rooms and theater space to hundreds of nonprofits in need of free or inexpensive program and performance space, and by serving as a public polling place for elections.

As a symbolic institution in the national capital region representing the highly recognized “JCC” brand and serving the broad community, the Bender JCC faces a range of security threats. We are directly affected by any and all incitement to violence against Jews and anti-Semitic rhetoric and actions locally, nationally, and abroad.

Immediately after 9/11, a comprehensive threat assessment and security analysis identified a number of security vulnerabilities, deemed the JCC to be a high-visibility profile target, and assessed the threat to our facility as high. This assessment became a reality several years ago when law enforcement alerted us to a credible threat against our institution and other JCCs in our region. Following the shooting at the Kansas City JCC almost 3 years ago, we undertook another security review, which identified additional operational security vulnerabilities.

Today we face a new threat of terrorism against our institution as a result of the recent spate of bomb threats and other incidents against JCCs and other Jewish institutions across the country, including two that have targeted our facility since January. These events forced the evacuation and sweeps of our building, disrupting our operations. As a result, we are again forced to further evaluate what capital investments may be required to enhance our security against emerging threats and expect that we will need to seek further NSGP resources in the next available grant cycle.

FEMA’s Nonprofit Security Grant Program has provided critical security resources to the Bender JCC. Based on the recommendations of multiple security analyses, the NSGP resources have enabled us to create layers of security through deterrence and hardening of our facility, including investments in fencing, gates, bollards, security cameras, bomb-proofing, and an integrated emergency communications system. We could not have afforded all of these security enhancements on our own. And we have used the grant program to leverage other grant and private funding.

The Bender JCC has had an extremely positive experience with the National Capital Region State Administrative Agency. They announce and roll out the program in a timely fashion, provide helpful briefings that explain the grant requirements and procedures in detail, and they are the “go-to” people with any questions or clarification needed during the period of performance. They have been great stewards of the program, providing structure and guidance to ensure the application process, oversight and compliance requirements, and project close-out procedures were in order and satisfied.

With respect to considerations for consolidation, we would be extremely concerned if the program were to be decentralized with nonprofits competing with multiple State and local law enforcement, firefighters, port and transit security, and other emergency responders for FEMA preparedness grants. We believe that we would find ourselves at a severe competitive disadvantage against these larger entities and would lose the level of attention and cooperation we currently have with the State Administrative Agency that has made our experience with the NSGP program successful.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today, and I welcome any questions you may have.

Mr. BARLETTA. Thank you for your testimony.

I will now begin the first round the questions limited to 5 minutes for each Member. If there are any additional questions following the first round, we will have additional rounds of questions, as needed.

Mr. Daroff and Mr. Feinstein, thank you so much for agreeing to be a witness at today's hearing. I personally asked for you two to participate because the threats we are seeing at Jewish community centers across the country, like the Bender Community Center here in Washington, are outrageous and unacceptable. This is domestic terrorism, and the full force of the law needs to be brought against the perpetrators.

In addition to Federal, State, and local law enforcement support, I know some of the community centers receive assistance from the Nonprofit Security Grant Program. Are these funds helpful in combating these threats? And what else can be done because I know that these threats are real?

Mr. FEINSTEIN. First, thank you for your statement of support, Mr. Chairman. These funds have been critical for us. We raise money every year for our own security needs, both for capital and operating expenses, yet we could not raise enough money on our own, and these grants make a tremendous difference for our JCC and other JCCs.

You can imagine, currently, with over 100 JCCs receiving bomb threats from across the country since January, my colleagues and I come into work every single day wondering whether we will be evacuating infants, toddlers, and seniors as a result of these threats. I would expect that many of my colleagues would welcome the opportunity to participate in this program, through expanding eligibility while maintaining the integrity of the program through increased resources.

Mr. DAROFF. Mr. Chairman, thank you as well.

I would just add that I received an alert last evening that three more JCCs have received bomb threats. One thing Congress can look at is structural ways in which smaller communities located outside of the UASI program could benefit from the Nonprofit Security Grant Program. As my colleague Michael has said, he is here to build Jewish community, to help us work out and build a stronger self and stronger bodies, not to be a security director. And so the assistance that the Federal Government has been able to provide, through NSGP as well as local law enforcement, has been essential. Expanding the program in a way that doesn't diminish the resources would be at the top of our list of things that Congress could do to address the particular threats of the nonprofit sector.

Mr. BARLETTA. Thank you.

As I said in my opening statement, fire grants have been essential to numerous fire departments in my district back home.

Mr. Martynuska, can you highlight how the Assistance to Firefighter grants can be particularly helpful to smaller, rural departments and how those departments can use these Federal funds to build upon and leverage local support?

Mr. MARTYNUSKA. Yes, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The basic tenets of fire protection are supported by these grants. In some of our smaller rural departments, if these grants weren't available, these departments would go out of existence. So their existence is dependent with just the basic needs of turnout gear, self-contained breathing apparatus, fire engines. Just the effort to survive, these grants, if they would be diminished, would cause them to go out of business.

Mr. BARLETTA. Thank you.

Mr. Crossley, as you know, an all-hazards plan starts with a threat assessment. When it comes to cybersecurity and the threat posed to the electrical grid, are you receiving clear guidance from FEMA and DHS as to what you should be planning for? Unfortunately, in talking with local governments, my sense is that they are not being told what to plan for. Should you be planning for the power to be out for 3 days, 3 weeks, 3 months? What should our communities be prepared for if the grid goes down for a significant period of time, leaving hospitals, water and sewer systems, and other infrastructure without power?

Mr. CROSSLEY. First of all, we are planning for those things. So we do our own threat assessment. We do our own hazard assessment with guidance from the State, from FEMA, and we identify both cybersecurity, electrical failure. I just participated in a—FEMA has run regional power outage exercises. So I was actually just at Ohio EMA participating in one of those. And I think that it is really threefold. So we need to talk to citizens, which we do as much as possible without overwhelming them. Then we need to talk to our partners in the local community and the region to say, depending on the size and scope of the outage, how would we get resources in? We work with, in our case, Duke Energy on, how is the system being protected? How are you ensuring that you can get the crews in here? And then we work through the State and through FEMA and the Emergency Management Assistance Compact to ensure that, provided the entire country is not without power, that we know how we are going to get resources from the other States. So you are taking it from the citizen preparedness to ensuring that whatever system we develop in Hamilton County is coordinated regionally. We are in a tristate area. So we talk to Kentucky, and we talk to Indiana as well. And then, of course, we are working through Ohio EMA to work with FEMA. So I think that, again, the benefit of the National Preparedness System, as I stated, is that it is not just where the boots are on the ground at the local level—all disasters are local—but that we need to work with them regionally, with our State, and through our State with FEMA and the neighboring States so that we can bring resources in. And these programs help ensure that we have a National Response System. So we identify the hazard. We identify how we are going to deal with the mass-care issues, with the feeding issues, with the sheltering issues. And then we make sure that, while we may not be able to purchase and warehouse everything in Hamilton County, that we know who we can call, and we keep people, and we continue to test and exercise those systems. So we are actually following former Administrator Fugate's mantra, which was: Don't plan for what you think you can handle; plan for what you

think you can't handle and start talking to people about how you would handle that.

Mr. BARLETTA. Well, putting my mayor's hat back on here for a moment, and I still believe—my experience has been, in talking with local officials, especially smaller cities, that we need to do a better job in communicating with them because they are going to be carrying the football when the light goes out and the power goes down. No one is coming to help when we have a massive outage. It is the local government that is going to be responsible, and loss of life will happen in the first 24, 48, 72 hours. I still don't get a sense that that communication—many of these mayors, the first thing I ask is, well, if this happens, how long are you are going to need to be prepared for? They can't answer. So, if you don't know how long you need to be prepared for, you can't be prepared.

Mr. CROSSLEY. So we always use the 3-day mantra, to be prepared for 3 days. Our challenge—and this is a challenge not just in Ohio but across the country. For example, Hamilton County has 49 individual jurisdictions, all at various sizes and capabilities, everything from the city of Cincinnati, which is a large city, to cities of a few hundred people. So you are right. So a lot of mayors are not necessarily aware. So we actually work across the—it is an ongoing educational process. So you are always going to run across elected and appointed officials who they either depend on somebody else to know how that is going to happen or they are not as educated. And so you ask, what is the benefit of the grants? The benefit of the grants, for example, with EMPG is, with the 50/50 hard dollar match, it provides skin in the game from the local government, but also that we are out there on a daily basis knocking on these doors. But when you are at the local level and you have limited staff capacity, you are hitting one and two at a time. So I think that you are right in that a lot of them don't know what they are going to do, and also the buck does stop with them. So I have 49 individual mayors or township trustee presidents or whatever it is. So, little by little, we are knocking on those doors, and we are talking about those issues, albeit in a manageable manner. And then, at the county level and working with the State, we focus on the catastrophic issues because, to be honest with you, when you start talking catastrophic to a small community, it can become quite overwhelming, which is why we need that system that can expand and contract as needed.

Mr. BARLETTA. Thank you.

The Chair now recognizes the ranking member of the full committee, Mr. DeFazio.

Mr. DEFazio. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I have been at several other events this morning. I regret I wasn't here for the opening statements. I will make a brief one, and then I have a quick question.

I have looked at the President's proposal and the so-called skinny budget, and for disaster, it is a disaster. And I guess down at the White House, they have either got amnesia or no sense of history, where we are going to go back to the, "You are doing a great job, Brownie," days, as if we don't remember what it is like when we aren't prepared. To cut 25 percent of the budget for preparedness grants, to cut the pre-disaster mitigation funds, that is whistling

through the graveyard. Not going to be any more floods, tornadoes, hurricanes, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions. Don't worry about it. And, by the way, don't call the Federal Government because we won't be there. And, oh, yeah, your local first responders won't have been trained, and they won't have the equipment they need. Otherwise, it is a really great idea.

And this is all so we can build a Maginot line, a wall so-called or fence now, on the Mexican border. You know, I was in Hong Kong when we still had Communist China and the Brits controlled Hong Kong. They had double fencing 20 feet tall. They used lethal force. It had concertina wire, barbed wire. And you could pay a smuggler 1,000 bucks, and they would get you over it in 90 seconds with a ladder contraption they invented. And people came over regularly. But we are going to build a wall or a fence through the Superstition Mountains in Arizona. And don't worry. No one will throw drugs over it. Nobody will sneak through it, under it, around it. It is absolutely nuts. But we are going to cut real preparedness to do this.

So just one question, since we have a group of people here, I just ask this: Do you think it makes sense to cut the multihazard mitigation program when we have the Congressional Budget Office and the Multihazard Mitigation Council saying we save 3 to 4 bucks post-disaster for every dollar we invest? And if you don't think that is an accurate figure and we should cut that budget, let me know. So does anybody want to advocate for cutting that budget and say it will make us more efficient?

Ms. Smith-Reeve.

Ms. SMITH-REEVE. No. I would not cut the budget on mitigation. Actually, if we are really going to bend this Federal runaway cost curve on disasters, we really need to move away from the current reactive model to a more proactive model, and that means shifting dollars to pre-disaster mitigation, our ability to buy down risk, and infuse resiliency into the communities at the local level. That is what is going to support and sustain local jurisdictions more than the reactive model that we have currently in place. So, to your point, between fiscal year 2011 and 2014, the Federal Government allocated roughly \$222 million for pre-disaster mitigation compared to \$3.2 billion for post-disaster mitigation, which is a ratio of roughly 1 to 14. In the aftermath of hurricanes and other large-scale events, you can see, based on the photographs that we see in the media, where good mitigation pre-disaster has been applied because you have structures that have withstood the forces that they were up against. So that alone is a clear demonstration of why we need to buy down risk within those high-hazard areas of our community and repurpose some of those funds. So, if it is moving homes out of a flood plain to higher ground, and repurposing that space and give it back to the community in a different way through park systems or whatever the case may be. That is an example of one thing that Arizona has done where we bought out a community and moved them to higher ground and gave that space back for the community to use. They got to decide on what that looked like for the future for their community. So I personally would be encouraging—and I know other State directors also echo this comment—

that, in order for us to buy down risk, we do need to have more mitigation dollars prior to an event.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Great. Excellent. I only have 20 seconds left. Does anybody disagree? OK. No one disagreed, let the record reflect.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate it.

Mr. BARLETTA. Thank you.

The Chair now recognizes Mr. Bost for 5 minutes.

Mr. BOST. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you for the opportunity to serve on this committee. It is kind of a committee that is near and dear to my heart.

Mr. Martynuska, he and I have something in common; we are both—I am one of the only Members of the Congress who was a professional firefighter. And so that means that we get to do those things that our mother would prefer that we didn't do, which is running into buildings other people are running out of, being around fire, spraying water, getting dirty, and then people like seeing us there. It was a pretty neat profession. Thank you for your service in that.

Let me ask, if I can, Mr. Lawless, as we are moving forward, what would you say are the most significant accomplishments for preparedness that have been able to occur with leveraging Federal dollars since we started these projects?

Mr. LAWLESS. Thank you, Mr. Bost.

Our most impressive accomplishment in preparedness has been, around the country, the creation of safe, secure, and resilient maritime facilities that meet all of the Federal security requirements facing port authorities. We have done that by leveraging the use of port security grants. We have created a layered system of security that begins with fences, cameras, identification systems, access control, radiological nuclear detection devices. We have done that. We have trained all of our port workers in security awareness. All of our—we do regular drills with all of our other agencies: our fire departments, our EMS service, our police departments, our emergency management agencies. A lot of that has come from funding from the Port Security Grant Program. So I would say the overall impact of the Port Security Grant Program has been to really create the safe and secure and resilient maritime facilities that will support the maritime transportation network, which is vital to our U.S. economy.

Mr. BOST. So now that we have it in place, what type of investment or how do we wisely invest so that we can maintain that? What type of breakdowns do you see? What concerns might be out there?

Mr. LAWLESS. Well, the challenge moving forward I see is, how do we maintain our current levels of preparedness? How do we maintain and improve that layered system of security? And I think the Port Security Grant Program is vital to that. A lot of assistance that we have purchased, a lot of the training that we have done now has to be recycled. A lot of the systems that we have bought have come to the end of use for their usability. And in order to maintain that level of security, we have to either replace those or upgrade those systems. Again, as the workforce changes within the port community and more stakeholders come in—you know, firefighters retire, and new firefighters come in; a police officer retires,

and a new police officer comes in; new threats evolve, whether they be physical threats or cybersecurity threats—we need the funds to get that workforce ready, to get our equipment ready to meet those challenges.

Mr. BOST. Thank you.

Just for the panel in general, and I am going to hope to get through this, but what do you—let me tell you that, whether it is for a man-made disaster or a natural disaster, we have got to be in a position of preparedness. I come from a very unique area in the fact that, in 1925, my hometown was virtually destroyed in a tornado, and because of that is why we have the early warning systems as far as tornadoes. So that was the early process as we tried to do this emergency preparedness.

So my question, and it is going to be difficult, but are we to a point where we need to be? And if not, what do we need to do to get there at a quicker rate?

Ms. SMITH-REEVE. That is a big question. So I think one of the things that we can look at is, there are always opportunities to evaluate a process, especially after it has been ongoing for a certain period of time. So, if we look at the Threat Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment and the “State Preparedness Report” process, it feeds up into the “National Preparedness Report.”

Looking at the timing that we have for analysis, it is too short. So the 12-month timeframe, by the time you are awarding grants based on the previous year’s risk assessment, those grants are just in process, and then you have to immediately turn around and re-evaluate your risk level. So there is not enough time for practical application to demonstrate growth and diminishing those gaps that we recognized in a previous year. Moving that timeline a bit will also allow for greater participation at the local level because, as you noted, many communities are diverse. Within the State of Arizona, we have some very large urban centers, but we have a lot of rural communities that we serve equally. And so, ensuring that we are recognizing their challenges, their gaps, where their risks lie, is going to be vastly different than the urban areas that we also serve. So, by taking another look at how we do that and being a little bit more methodical and concentrating on the needs for rural Arizona equal to those urban areas is a way for us to move that effort forward.

Mr. BOST. My time has expired. I will yield back, but I will probably follow up with the rest of you. Thank you.

Mr. BARLETTA. Thank you.

The Chair now recognizes Ranking Member Johnson.

Mr. JOHNSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ms. Smith-Reeve, in your written statement, you discuss a proposal to combine all of the preparedness grants into one program. Congress has rejected past administration proposals to do the same thing. How does NEMA’s proposal differ from past administration proposals, if at all? And, also, how will combining all of those grants lead to more effective spending by States and local governments on preparedness activities?

Ms. SMITH-REEVE. Thank you for your question. My apologies for the interruption.



So, with regard to what NEMA, our voting members, had put together and proposed to FEMA was a consolidation. What was submitted forward from FEMA was different than what was proposed by NEMA. And I think there were some things that were lost in translation because I guarantee that those to my left are probably opposed to what we submitted and proposed as far as consolidation of grants.

The intent with our message was to give greater flexibility to all of the parties that are represented within a State's boundaries. So, by combining the suite of grants, it would allow a State to go through the Threat Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment, define where their biggest risk areas are, and then allow them to determine where they are spending their grant dollars. So, by combining the grants—what you are combining are the facets of each. So you are not limiting a jurisdiction to only spending a certain amount of money on ports, only spending a certain amount of money on the urban area, only spending a certain amount of money on fill-in-the-blank. It allows that jurisdiction to collectively determine where their highest risk areas are and allow them to determine what funding is required for that.

Mr. JOHNSON. OK, thank you.

Do any of the other panelists have an opinion on the issue of combining preparedness grants?

Mr. DAROFF. Yes, sir, Mr. Johnson.

With the continuing and growing record of threats, attempted attacks, and deadly occurrences targeting Jewish communal institutions as well as other vulnerable populations within the nonprofit sector, we believe there is ample justification for Congress to maintain the Nonprofit Security Grant Program as a singular stand-alone initiative as a matter of national security preparedness. And Congress should consider ways to strengthen the program rather than dismantle it. We believe that consolidating the program would disenfranchise at-risk nonprofit stakeholders who are not able to meaningfully participate in or effectively compete with larger, more formidable stakeholders for resources in an integrated competitive process. So we strongly believe that keeping the programs separate and segregated serves the interest of the country as well as those of at-risk nonprofits.

Mr. JOHNSON. All right. Thank you.

Anyone else?

Yes, sir, Mr. Lawless.

Mr. LAWLESS. Thank you, Mr. Johnson.

By reducing the grants—we are totally opposed to making those block grants, but by reducing those grants and combining these grants into block grants, in our situation, the ports would be forced to compete with other interests both on the State level and local level for those crucial and vital funds.

We are international borders. We are ports of entry. We are rigidly defined by Federal regulations, and we are forced to comply with Federal directives and Federal mandates that are usually unfunded. So, to meet those unfunded mandates, the Port Security Grant Program has been essential to our success in securing our ports.

Mr. JOHNSON. Well, Mr. Lawless, if the Port Security Grant Program is cut, as proposed by the Trump administration, will the ports be able to pick up the slack in funding and maintain current levels of security?

Mr. LAWLESS. Our position is no. We would like to maintain the current level, if not go back to the \$400 million that was originally appropriated in 2005. That has allowed us to secure our ports and to keep the maritime transportation working in a secure, safe, and a resilient fashion. So no. We are opposed to the 40-percent cut in port security grant funds.

Mr. JOHNSON. All right. I thank you.

My time is out, and I yield back.

Mr. BARLETTA. Thank you.

The Chair now recognizes Mr. Graves for 5 minutes.

Mr. GRAVES. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to thank all of you for being here today.

Ms. Smith-Reeves, I have a question for you. I am from south Louisiana and had the unfortunate opportunity to ride out Katrina, Hurricanes Gustav and Ike in 2008, Hurricane Isaac in 2012, record high water in the Mississippi River system in 2011, and a number of other disasters.

One trend that I see throughout these disasters, and let me actually make note probably one of the more profound ones, in addition to Katrina, was the August floods where we just had a 1,000-year flood in my hometown. It is not Government that often comes in and actually serves as the first responder. I want to be clear: our firefighters and wildlife and fisheries agents and others, police officers, have been remarkable. But you look at the number of officers and firefighters and others we have compared to the number of people affected by some of these major disasters, the public plays a huge role. All of these planning efforts, in many cases, seem to I guess lack or avoid the role that the public plays and the capacity that they bring to the table.

I am just curious at your sort of, you know, 50,000-foot-level take on the role of individuals and how you best see to use that capability and free asset in disaster response and preparation.

Ms. SMITH-REEVE. Thank you for that question. And you are right in that the public, whom we all serve, are typically the first responders in any type of event because we encourage them, not only to be prepared to support themselves, their families, but also their neighbors and others within their community. So efforts to train, inform, and educate are critical, and I think we seek out many opportunities to do that. One way that I think we could do a better job is—and to really shift the visibility and elevate our level of preparedness within the members of our community—is to get into the schools and start educating the youth in our community because those are going to be the future for this Nation. And by educating them and informing them on how important it is to enhance their personal preparedness level and ways to support their community in community preparedness will build resiliency within the Nation.

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Crossley, would you care to comment on that at all, just the role that you see just a private citizen playing in disaster response?

Mr. CROSSLEY. So one of the phrases I commonly use when I talk to citizen groups is there are 2,000 of us and 800,000 of you. So we actively engage, and so a lot of this is done at the local level when you talk about engaging the citizens in helping with the disaster response and recovery. And so myself and many of my counterparts across the country, we use the former—or current Citizen Corps Program, the Community Emergency Response Team concept, and then we work a lot through the voluntary organizations. So there is almost a group for everybody that they can affiliate with. And so we work with our community members to develop spontaneous volunteer plans. We both do it virtually through 211 and 311 to make sure that they are engaged and know where the volunteer opportunities are because we like people to be engaged. So you don't want people just randomly showing up and doing, in your case, flood remediation. So I have done flood remediation in Slidell in 1996, if you remember that flood. And so what we do is, from the planning perspective, we start to work with our community partners because, that way, you keep it organized, the Red Cross, The Salvation Army, the various religious groups. We are doing a big effort right now with our Jewish community center. And so we work with them to accept volunteers. We develop the structure under which they can operate and then, during a disaster, one of our first goals is to get that information out there: here is how you can help. And so I agree with you that it is critical, and it is the only way that the few thousand Government employees are going to be able to serve, as Chairman Barletta, asked, how are you going to handle the masses in a disaster? So I think that has been supported under the National Preparedness System to develop those plans, to develop those procedures, and that is where myself and many of my colleagues are going on a local level because, at the end of the day, I am the face to the public, along with the board of county commissioners, that says, how are you responding to this disaster? So we are putting that in place.

Mr. GRAVES. Very quickly. So I just want to make sure I understand. So you actually, in a very dynamic environment of a disaster, you actually adapt your volunteer efforts to that particular disaster and begin communicating with constituents, with citizens about how they can assist and what they can do to assist, is that—

Mr. CROSSLEY. Yes, you have to; otherwise, they will do it anyway. So we want to coordinate financial donations as well as physical donations and then donations of time. So we put these plans and procedures in place and work with our voluntary partners to help corral that and send it where it is needed based on our damage assessments and our long-term recovery needs.

Mr. GRAVES. Thank you.

And thank you again all for your testimony.

Mr. BARLETTA. Thank you.

The Chair now recognizes Mr. Sires for 5 minutes.

Mr. SIRES. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you to the panelists for being here.

I am also a former mayor from a community across from the 9/11 towers. And if I learned anything in my years as mayor is how unprepared we were to deal with a disaster. I mean, one commu-

nity didn't know what to do with the other one; one fire department didn't coordinate. I also represent the tunnels. The tunnels were closed. People were coming down; they didn't know that the tunnels were closed. Everybody sent their fire trucks and their rescue teams trying to help, but we were so unprepared. And this is a topic that I worked on over the years.

Today we are much better. The county works a lot better. There is more coordination. There is more communication. There is more equipment because of the grants that we have been receiving. And we are a lot better prepared now than we were.

So my concerns are with the cuts. You know, I represent the ports. I represent the Port of Newark, the Port of Elizabeth. And if we get a cut what they are talking about, it is going to be devastating for our security, all those ports. A small attack could paralyze the commerce on those ports.

So I guess what I am trying to do, Mr. Lawless, is I have gotten the message that you are as concerned as I am regarding the security of these ports.

Mr. LAWLESS. We are very concerned about the cuts to the Port Security Grant Program. We have worked hard over these last 15 years to achieve a certain level of security. We hope to maintain that level of security. But you are correct, Mr. Sires, on the potential for an attack in a port; that could result in the closure of most ports around the country, which would have a dramatic and devastating impact to our economic vitality as a country. And we are hopeful that we can maintain that level of security, and our goal is to prevent any type of attack in the ports.

Just to mention working together with, integrating with our fire departments and our police departments, we heard from Mayor Pugh talk about the Boston Marathon bombing and the success of the first responders in saving lives and responding to that attack. That is all the result of training that we do together: exercising, drilling, meeting, having plans in place. And a lot of that has been the result of Port Security Grant Programs, UASI grant programs that have supported those training programs. And without those programs, it will be difficult for local cities and towns, States and port authorities to continue that high level of interaction of training and of equipping our first responders to meet these challenges that we face every day.

Mr. SIRES. You know, I am one of those people that believes that the fire department, you can't get them enough equipment, you know. And it is very expensive. I don't think the community knows how expensive it is. But today, with all the requirements that fire departments and fire and the type of equipment, I don't think you can survive without grants. I don't think these communities could make it without some form of grants. So—

Mr. MARTYNUSKA. I agree, Representative. I have to be—my career was in the city of Johnstown, where we have had our share of natural disasters, man-made and both. But I was on duty when 9/11 took place, and I saw what happened during the day. As we all know, flight 93 came down about 15 miles from where we were working. We evacuated downtown and how it stretched our resources. The communication system collapsed. The cellular system collapsed on the day that that happened. It changed our world as

we knew it. And, personally, I was one of three or four hazardous materials technicians. And in the coming months, we ran hundreds of white powder calls because we did not have a hazmat team. We have since built that hazmat program. We have since done urban search and rescue, confined space rescue, river rescue, all because we had moneys available to do that.

My concern is with the taxing of the resources that we have in maintaining the infrastructure we have been able to build. It is very difficult for small communities to provide those resources as it is. And if there are cutbacks to that, it is going to make it even more difficult for those choices they have to make.

Mr. SIRE. My time is up, Mr. Chairman. Thank you very much.

Mr. BARLETTA. OK, thank you, Mr. Sires.

Mrs. Napolitano

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank the panelists for this long hearing. It is really important.

I come from a different point of view, and I ask Ms. Reeves—Smith-Reeves, Mr. Crossley, Mr. Martynuska, and Mr. Roberts, what do you think your first responders, your men, your women, are prepared mentally? There are many suicides within the fire department and many other securities that we need to be concerned with because our first responders face many, many challenges. They deal with work-related tragedies, and they have to take it home. Are you prepared to give them mental health services, and would these grants cover that training?

Ms. SMITH-REEVE. I will let Mr. Roberts start.

Mr. ROBERTS. So, from a law enforcement perspective, we have robust employee assistance programs that deal with stress. The police officers deal with a lot of the things that the rest of society doesn't want to deal with. We are the ones left to deal with it. And I think it really impacts our employees. We have a pretty robust program that deals with that. However, these Federal funds aren't used or intended to be used for that type of program although there is a need. I believe there is a definitely a need, not only in our profession but in the firefighters and other first responders. So there could be niche there.

Mr. MARTYNUSKA. I will echo Mr. Roberts' comments. The subject of PTSD in the fire service is reaching epidemic proportions. Just this week in the State of Pennsylvania, we witnessed three line-of-duty deaths. And working with our members across the State, you can see the toll that that takes on them. And we hear about this every day.

The grant program doesn't cover that. We are making strides to get our folks the help they need through our international and through our State associations, but there is definitely a lag with that type—first on recognition and then on moneys to help.

Mr. CROSSLEY. Again, I agree with their comments about the grant funds specifically funding that for first responders. I know, in my line of work, we do, as part of our training program, offer training on disaster mental health because you have to watch—I have responded everything since 9/11 to disasters in Kansas and Ohio, and I know that the stress of seeing the devastation that can happen after disaster. So we do provide training on how to plan to

deal with those effects, not with the direct impact of a chief taking it back to their department. And we do depend on the employee assistance programs and the particular incident stress debriefing to handle those. But the grant support for it to expand that and deal with the day-to-day stressors would definitely then have the direct impact of supporting if there was a major disaster and you see that kind of devastation.

Ms. SMITH-REEVE. And this is also an opportunity to for us to leverage other partners and their grants and mission sets, such as Department of Health Services. One of the things that they also support is behavioral health aspects. And so these critical incident stress management teams that do come in and provide the support that has been discussed helps the first responders and ensures that their families are also taken care of at the same time. So it is vitally important to everything that we do, especially in these high-stress environments.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Well, I realize that this is not directly addressed in the FEMA, but it is important to note that many of the tragedies, especially in bus or rail systems, sometimes mental health plays a big part in people—well, being antisocial. Let's put it that way. I would hope that, in the future, you would consider maybe asking for inclusiveness in the program to deal with that because, as much as you can give them equipment to ready them for the purpose, you should equip them for their well-being.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Mr. BARLETTA. Thank you.

The Chair recognizes Ms. Titus for 5 minutes.

Ms. TITUS. Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you for letting me sit in on this subcommittee. You know, I represent the heart of the Las Vegas Valley, from the airport down the fabulous strip to downtown. So this issue of emergency preparedness is very important to my district.

I am also especially delighted that we have as one of our guests and members of the panel our assistant sheriff, Mr. Roberts, from Las Vegas to give you some perspective of the unique challenges that we face. Not only do 2 million people live there in the valley, but we welcome every year over 42 million visitors from all around the world, speaking all kinds of different languages and don't know how to find an exit except from the Paris Las Vegas Hotel and Casino to the New York-New York Hotel and Casino, which is a 20-minute walk. So we need the help.

Not only do we have all these strangers in town, we hosted the last year 4 of the top 10 largest trade shows in the world, including consumer electronics, which brought in over 170,000 people in a short number of days, just that one convention alone. Electric daisy carnival welcomes more than 320,000 attendees. We have 11 of the 20 largest hotels in the world in my district. And pretty soon we are likely to see the Raiders playing there in the district too. And that is going to bring even more crazy people to town. I am a Raider fan; so I can say that.

So, when we talk about UASI funding and the Department of Homeland Security, we have special challenges. You heard Mr. Roberts say that the formula is not constructed well to take into account places like Las Vegas. We have been saying this for years

that the formula is funded. It fails to reflect the impact that a terrorist attack would have, not only on the regional economy, but also on neighboring Nellis, on Creech, on Boulder Dam, all of those things are left out of formula. We need it to be updated. And every year, we go back and ask for a little more money for Las Vegas and get a little more, but that is not enough. It is not way the formula should work.

So I would ask you, Sheriff Roberts, two questions. One is, would you give us—and you mentioned this just superficially—some specifics of how that formula needs to be changed, like recognizing convention centers as opposed to lumping them all into one? And, second—and all of you can weigh in on this—is that this money is supposed to go to improve our preparedness, make us less susceptible to whatever the catastrophe might be, but do we really do a good job of evaluating how efficiently that money is spent? Because we seem to give the same amount of money to the same people every year. Are they just adding things, or are they really improving the situation? Mr. Roberts?

Mr. ROBERTS. Thank you, ma'am. So the one issue that we have that you mentioned is clustering. We have several of the world's largest hotels in the world, but they are treated as one cluster under the threat analysis program. So we don't really get a true reflection of the threat that should be measured. Another issue is we don't include two of our large military installations that are there. They are covered under another program. However, those folks live in our community, and there are threats in our community that those grants that are covered by the military don't cover. So we do that out of the minuscule amount of money that we get from UASI.

And then, to Congresswoman Titus' point, as far as the second portion of your question—and I have already forgotten now. Sorry.

Ms. TITUS. Efficiency—

Mr. ROBERTS. Oh—

Ms. TITUS. How do we evaluate it?

Mr. ROBERTS. So to the point that she makes is that, oftentimes, there is a lot of money built on target hardening or a lot of grant justification built on target hardening, but because the grant cycle is so long and they are reapplying for grants in such a short time, there is no evaluation on what was done with those funds. And so I believe that that should be an important part of the process, is that—because some of the larger agencies—I am not going to name any, but we have visited, that I have been before—they can't spend the money that they get because they get so much of it. And some of the smaller, lower UASI areas just don't get any funds.

Ms. TITUS. Anybody else want to answer this?

Mr. DAROFF. I would just add, Ms. Titus, that the Nonprofit Security Grant Program is considered efficient and effective. Hundreds of nonprofits have received funds, including the Jewish Federation in Las Vegas. The decisions are made by local law enforcement doing assessments of the physical plant and then with Federal law enforcement making the final decision. The grants are capped at \$75,000, thereby assisting many, many nonprofit organizations annually who have been assessed to be at high risk. So it

is a vibrant program and one that we endorse as being very helpful in protecting at-risk nonprofits.

Ms. TITUS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. BARLETTA. Thank you.

These are all important programs. They have a strong return on investment. They save lives and money in post-disaster recovery. The National Preparedness System and the grants that help implement it allow the Nation to share critical response capabilities between States and communities so that every State doesn't have to duplicate those capabilities. The system is a force multiplier, and it is money well spent. Not every State can afford an urban search-and-rescue team or a chemical response team, but this system gives them access to such teams when they need them. In addition, the Pre-Disaster Mitigation Grants are a competitive program that hardens high-risk properties so they avoid damage during disasters.

Study after study has shown \$1 spent on mitigation saves \$4 in future disaster spending over the life of the project. The way to save on disaster cost is to prepare for disasters and reduce disaster damage. If we are not prepared, recovery can be delayed by years and add billions in Federal disaster spending, economic losses, and lost tax revenue. When it comes to pre-disaster mitigation, prevention is worth its weight in gold.

Thank you all for your testimony. Your comments have been helpful to today's discussion.

If there are no further questions, I would ask unanimous consent that the record of today's hearing remain open until such time as our witnesses have provided answers to any questions that may be submitted to them in writing and unanimous consent that the record remain open for 15 days for any additional comments and information submitted by Members or witnesses to be included in the record of today's hearing.

Without objection, so ordered.

I would like to thank our witnesses again for their testimony today. If no other Members have anything to add, the subcommittee stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 12:03 p.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]





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**BUILDING A 21ST CENTURY INFRASTRUCTURE FOR AMERICA:  
THE NATIONAL PREPAREDNESS SYSTEM**

**STATEMENT BY**

**THE HONORABLE CATHERINE PUGH  
MAYOR OF BALTIMORE, MD  
ON BEHALF OF  
THE UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF MAYORS**

**BEFORE THE  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, PUBLIC BUILDINGS AND  
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT  
COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE  
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVE**

**MARCH 16, 2017**

Chairman Barletta, Ranking Member Johnson, and members of the Committee, I am Catherine Pugh, Mayor of the City of Baltimore. I appreciate the opportunity to testify before you on the National Preparedness System and how it has helped my city and region, along with cities across the country to prevent, mitigate, prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters – both man-made and natural.

We are pleased that this Subcommittee is led by two veterans of local government. Chairman Barletta, we especially appreciate the opportunity to discuss these issues with you, a former mayor. I'm a relatively new mayor, but my colleagues tell me once a mayor, always a mayor and I know you will understand where we are coming from on these issues. And we expect that Ranking Member Johnson, as a former DeKalb County Commissioner who is married to a current one, will also understand our perspective on these issues. It is local first responders who are first on the scene when an event occurs and local officials who manage the response. When an event is big enough we get help from our state and the federal government, but generally that comes later.

My basic message today is that mayors and other local officials across the nation strongly support the existing menu of preparedness programs. As I believe my testimony will show, they are working. We recognize that they may not be perfect and some changes may be needed, but they are the product of years of work by Congress, the Administration, state and local governments, emergency managers, and first responders. The federal grant funds which the Department of Homeland Security through the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) has provided clearly have improved the nation's planning, mitigation, preparedness, prevention, response, and recovery capabilities.

Particularly important is the incentive they provide for federal, tribal, state, territorial and local jurisdictions to work together. By planning, training, and conducting exercises together, local first responders, public health officials, emergency managers, and state and federal officials are able and ready to work together when an incident happens. This pre-planning and coordination prevents confusion, and directly saves lives.

There have been cuts in the funding available through several key programs in recent years and we are alarmed by additional cuts which we hear may be coming. These funding reductions have had and will have a significant impact on our ability to sustain and enhance capabilities – in Baltimore and in cities across the nation. At a time when we see an increase in the number and intensity of natural disasters and an increase in violent extremism and incidents of terrorism – generally homegrown – in our cities, it seems foolhardy to cut back on the federal funding that helps us prevent, mitigate, prepare for, respond to, and recover from these incidents.

#### **Increased Local Response Capabilities Resulting from DHS Investments**

##### ***Boston***

The April 15, 2013 bombing at the Boston Marathon continues to provide an excellent example of how DHS investments provided through the Urban Area Security Initiative program have paid off. There can be no doubt that they contributed significantly to the Boston area's quick and effective response to this horrific act of terrorism. Specifically, grant funds were used to:

- **Increase communications interoperability** through the purchase of new portable radios and of new mobile radios for every first responder in the region; the development and maintenance of one of the first shared radio channel plans for public safety first responders (police, fire, and EMS) within the nine cities and towns in the region; the development and support of the Boston Area Ambulance Mutual Aid Radio Network which allowed communications between private ambulance companies and Boston EMS as they treated and transported approximately 282 victims to nearby hospitals; and the development and support of the Boston Area Police Emergency Radio Network which enables most first responders in the region to communicate with agencies from other jurisdictions and during the incident for operational and field communications across jurisdictions after the bombings and for the manhunt operations.
- **Facilitate intelligence and information sharing** by providing salaries for nine intelligence and GIS analysts and equipment (e.g., television screens, computers, surveillance, Sensitive Compartmented Information Facility) within the Boston Regional Intelligence Center (BRIC). These assets were critical in protecting and providing information to the first responders in the field. The analysts monitored, vetted, and triaged information concerning over 280 suspicious or criminal acts within Boston. In addition, they provided risk assessments on potential infrastructure targets, reviewed videos and social media for leads, and coordinated resources. For the presidential visit several days later, the analysts also provided pre-event threat assessments. After the capture of the bombing suspects, the BRIC tracked 42 potential and scheduled events, such as vigils and protests. In addition, BRIC analysts were able to use the Digital Sandbox System, purchased with UASI funds, to build their risk assessment reports.
- **Provide critical infrastructure and key resources**, including 13 Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Detection K-9 Units from Boston, Revere, and Quincy which were deployed and assisted with identifying possible explosive devices and patrolling certain areas during the incident; EOD Personal Protective Equipment which the police departments used to protect their officers; EOD Equipment, including EOD robots which were used to search certain areas and respond to suspicious packages and EOD inspection cameras (night vision monoculars) which helped officers to see during the manhunt that began Thursday night; two Tactical Response Vehicles – Ballistic Engineered Armored Response Counter Attack (BearCat) vehicles – which the Boston Police Department used to protect their SWAT personnel as they patrolled streets, searching for the bombing suspects; and a CBRNE Mobile Command Vehicle which was used to transport Special Operations Division Tactical and Command personnel to the incident site and support on-scene intelligence sharing and investigations among first responders and transmit information to off-site locations. This vehicle was deployed for the marathon event and after the bombings was used for securing the incident site and then was moved to Watertown during the manhunt operations there.
- **Enhance planning and community preparedness** by providing a shelter trailer which was deployed to the family assistance center that served as a shelter on the evening of the bombing; a Mass Notification System, ALERT Boston, which is the city's emergency notification system and which was used to send a message to the public informing them to

shelter-in-place during the manhunt; Variable Message Sign Boards, which were posted at the marathon and in Watertown for the manhunt operations to inform the public of safety messages; and light towers, which were used at the crime scene for evidence collection during the night.

### ***Baltimore***

Since 2003, the Baltimore UASI has invested tens of millions of dollars in preparedness initiatives that have benefited our city and our region. Recent and expected further funding cuts, however, are severely affecting our ability to maintain and build on these investments and cut across law enforcement, fire, health and human services, information technology and the many other public safety services we rely on every day. Within the City of Baltimore they have and will negatively impact the Police Department, Fire Department, Office of Emergency Management, and Department of Health. Among the specific investments these departments have made with these funds are:

- Mass care shelter supplies (cots, blankets, linens, hygiene kits, etc.)
- Emergency notification systems (BEACON, Reverse 911)
- Crisis incident management software (WebEOC)
- Mobile command & communications vehicles (command vehicles)
- HAZMAT prevention & response (chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear & explosive detection equipment)
- Law enforcement protection & response (tactical gear)
- Law enforcement intelligence (license plate readers, CCTV systems, cell phone tracking)
- Emergency management planner personnel

Further, the Emergency Management Performance Grant and other preparedness grant programs have been essential to the staffing and operations of our Office of Emergency Management. That Office is responsible for emergency planning across all mission areas, which requires a high level of organizational, writing, research and intellectual skills to craft policy and develop procedures. These policies and procedures cover both large-scale planning efforts such as mass evacuation as well as the often overlooked and overwhelmingly underfunded area of disaster recovery.

For over 10 years, the City of Baltimore has led the efforts of our regional Maryland Taskforce 2 (MD-TF2) Urban Search and Rescue (US&R) team. The response team is designed to provide a coordinated response to disasters in urban environments. The task force can respond to regional, state, and national disasters, including earthquakes, hurricanes, widespread tornadoes, and manmade and terrorist events within two hours.

MD-TF2 is comprised of 140 personnel on two 70-person teams which are designed to be logistically self-sufficient for the first seven days of operation and able to function for up to 14 days. Each 70-person team is further divided into two groups, each of which operates in 12-hour shifts on a disaster scene. All task force members must be sufficiently cross-trained in search and rescue skill areas to ensure depth of capability and integrated task force operations. MD-TF2 is truly a multi-disciplinary organization that includes six areas of specialists in rescue, medical, hazmat, logistics, technical, and search. Since its inception, MD-TF2 has been deployed on many high-profile statewide and national missions, notably Hurricane Katrina in 2005 and Hurricane

Sandy in 2012. Their deployment to these and many other smaller scale activations has resulted in saving countless lives in Maryland and across the nation.

Unfortunately, due to the drastic funding cuts to the City of Baltimore and the Baltimore UASI, funding to maintain, support, and enhance the MD-TF2 US&R team was eliminated. This has greatly reduced our capabilities to identify all high-risk areas needing to be searched within the first 24 hours, complete 70 percent of the high-risk areas needing lifesaving mass search and rescue operations within the first 48 hours of an incident, and conduct search and rescue operations for 100 percent of the high-risk areas – 60 percent of which are expected to have household pets – during the first 72 hours of an incident. In sum, the cuts to US&R have impacted the team's ability to roster new members, train all members, and properly equip the team with the tools necessary to perform the high-level, high-risk demands of a Type-1 response team.

### **Recommendations to Strengthen the National Preparedness System**

Based on our experiences with the National Preparedness System, America's mayors recommend the following:

- We urge Congress to resist further cuts in preparedness and other homeland security programs. Recent cuts have reduced our capabilities to prevent, mitigate, prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters – both natural and manmade. Additional cuts would make us weaker, not stronger, further reducing our capabilities at the same time that we are experiencing an increase in the number and intensity of natural disasters and an increase in violent extremism and incidents of terrorism in our cities.
- We also urge you to continue to resist any attempts to consolidate homeland security grants. The grants that are in place provide targeted funding to local areas and critical infrastructure considered to be at the highest risk and have had a huge positive impact on the country's preparedness.
- Recognizing there is always room for improvement, however, we urge that any program reform or changes be consistent with the following principles developed by the U.S. Conference of Mayors and other organizations which represent local governments, first responders, and emergency managers:
  - **Increase Transparency** – It must be clear and understandable to the federal government and the public how the states are distributing funds, why they are making these decisions, and where the funds are going.
  - **Increase Local Involvement** – Local government officials, including emergency managers and emergency response officials, know best the threats and vulnerabilities in their areas. The Threat Hazard Identification Risk Assessment (THIRA) process must include the input of local elected and emergency response officials, and FEMA must be able to audit states by comparing local risk assessments to the state level THIRA. Further, local governments should have the opportunity to challenge a state THIRA that inadequately reflects their needs or input.

- ***Provide Flexibility with Accountability*** – Any changes to the existing federal grant programs should allow federal funding to meet individual local needs, and preparedness gaps as identified at the local level. Effective but sometimes less politically popular programs, like mitigation, must still receive funding.
  - ***Protect Local Funding*** – Since event impact and response are primarily local in nature, grant funding should support primarily local prevention and preparedness efforts, as is the case under the current program structure. It is important that the vast majority of federal homeland security grants continue to fund local prevention and response activities, including local emergency managers and first responders, and activities that support their preparedness efforts.
  - ***Sustain Terrorism Prevention*** – The current emphasis on supporting law enforcement's terrorism prevention activities must be maintained. The federal grant funds should not be used to support larger state bureaucracies at the expense of operational counter terrorism preparedness, threat analysis, and information sharing activities.
  - ***Provide Incentives for Metropolitan Area Regionalization*** – Homeland security grants must support preparedness in metropolitan intra-state and, where appropriate, inter-state regions.
- We believe that the FEMA Administrator should have emergency management experience at the local level, something which the leaders of this Subcommittee should understand as former local government officials. This is not a position for "on the job training". Disasters do not allow someone time to catch up.
  - While we understand the need to reduce costs, we want you to know that we have significant concerns with the disaster deductible concept that FEMA has proposed. While many details have not yet been developed, it appears at this point that it would shift costs from the federal government to state and local governments and likely further complicate federal-state-local relationships when disasters occur.

### Conclusion

As this Committee examines the National Preparedness System and the suite of preparedness grant programs and possible reforms to them, I urge you to increase, not decrease, local involvement and flexibility. Local officials know best the threats they face, and they know best the gaps which exist in community preparedness. The preparedness grant programs should support primarily local prevention and preparedness efforts since disaster impacts and response are local in nature.

I appreciate the opportunity to testify before you today on this issue of vital importance to me, my city and my region, and to mayors and other local officials across the nation. We look forward to working with you to continue to strengthen the National Preparedness System.

**“Building a 21st Century Infrastructure for America: The National Preparedness System”  
Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Management  
Thursday, March 16, 2017, 10:00 a.m.  
2167 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C.**

**Questions for the Record to Hon. Catherine Pugh, Mayor of Baltimore, MD**

*Submitted on behalf of Representative Lou Barletta (PA-11)*

**Threat and Hazard Identification Risk Assessment**

1. The recipients of the Homeland Security grant programs are required to complete an annual Threat and Hazard Identification Risk Assessment (THIRA) as a tool to help identify certain gaps in their capabilities that may exist. Most of this effort seems to be concentrated at the state-level, which may leave locals insufficiently engaged in the state THIRA process. As we know, all disasters are local, and it is our first responders that will be the first on the ground for any incident. With this in mind, are local stakeholders being included as equal partners in this process? What recommendations do you have to improve the THIRA program and to ensure that locals are more engaged and local capability gaps are more correctly accounted for?

**ANSWER:** Baltimore has conducted its own regional THIRA each year as part of the UASI program. We also coordinate closely with the State of Maryland THIRA process. Our first THIRA effort had over 80 of our regional stakeholders involved in a three-day workshop. Subsequent THIRA's have been conducted working with our stakeholders, which includes the State, to update threat and capability information. We may be one of a few UASI's to have conducted the full THIRA process for all 32 core capabilities. This includes determining the resource requirements for all core capabilities and determining current gaps in these resource areas. The State has conducted the THIRA process on a regional and state basis. One of our regional counties conducted a THIRA at the county level. More of this type of regional and localized approach to assessments will certainly improve the capability estimation at the local level. We also conducted the State Preparedness Report at the local level as a way to assess our current capabilities. While this tool could be improved, it does serve as a means to measure capabilities across the planning, organization, equipment, training, and exercise areas. This type of assessment is not required for a UASI but has proved to be a useful tool in our strategic planning processes. Other states and UASIs should consider our example in working together on conducting the THIRA process.

**National Preparedness Report**

1. In your opinion, is the National Preparedness Report an accurate reflection of the state of preparedness across the country? Does it accurately incorporate the “whole community” and the strengths and weaknesses at every level of government? How could the report be improved to more accurately reflect capability gaps?

**ANSWER:** The Preparedness Report efforts have room for improvement. To fully understand our nation's level of preparedness, a comprehensive process needs to be undertaken to conduct and evaluate capability estimations and assessments as described above but also to include an analysis of the efficacy of planning, training and exercises at the local, regional and state levels, as well as the federal, tribal and territorial levels to include the whole community. It is also a challenge to measure the preparedness and capabilities of the private and non-profit sectors. Our preparedness is based on a system comprised of many others systems which each depends on each other. Without the entire system being assessed for preparedness, including resources on hand vs. resources required, it is difficult to tell how prepared we are.

#### **Fusion Centers**

1. Based on your experience, how far along is the federal government in implementing the information-sharing process, not only with FBI and DHS but the Joint Terrorism Task Forces and the fusion centers? Is the information-sharing process where it needs to be, or does it need to be reformed?

**ANSWER:** We are fortunate in Maryland to have an effective fusion center and a joint terrorism task force that brings both our intelligence and information sharing together on a state and regional basis. While more information sharing is always welcome, we believe that this process is working. It could be improved with more frequent and better products both classified and unclassified. While the Department of Homeland Security has stressed involving more first responder disciplines in the information sharing process, our center takes a liaison approach and coordinates frequently with our other (non-law enforcement disciplines). This seems to be a viable approach: depending on both information sharing with law enforcement and outreach to other disciplines.

#### **Additional Legislative Changes**

1. How can Congress utilize legislative changes and oversight to improve the National Preparedness System and to give states and locals the necessary tools to build the capabilities to prepare for, respond to, recover from, and mitigate against emergencies and disasters of all kinds?

**ANSWER:** The National Preparedness System appears to still be a work in progress. We encourage continued efforts to refine and improve this. We are aware that an effort is underway to review and revise the annual risk calculation process. We support this effort, not because we think the risk calculation is faulty, but because we think the application of the risk scores is sometime arbitrary. We recently saw a severe drop in funding and then saw our risk rating climb to higher than it had been before; yet, our funding level did not increase in kind. The amount that one city vs. another receives is not strictly based on risk as it should be. In addition, the calculation process, and the congressional guidance to fund 85% of risk, causes wild swings in the number of cities funded each year as well as the amount of funding. It is difficult for cities to build and sustain long-term capabilities when the funding level fluctuates like this. For that



reason, we would encourage the development of an improved model: one that produces less fluctuation in the level of funding and the number of cities funded. Of course, more funding would help as well as many cities no longer receive funding, and those that suffer reductions, such as Baltimore, have to reduce capabilities as a result.

**Mrs. Wendy Smith-Reeve**

**President, National Emergency Management Association  
Director, Arizona Department of Emergency and Military Affairs (DEMA) Emergency  
Management Division**

**STATEMENT FOR THE RECORD**

**On behalf of the  
National Emergency Management Association**

**Submitted to the House Transportation and Infrastructure  
Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Management**

***Building a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Infrastructure for America: The National Preparedness System***

**March 16, 2017**

National Emergency Management Association  
444 N Capitol Street, NW, Suite 401  
Washington, D.C. 20001  
202-624-5381

### **Introduction**

Thank you, Chairman Barletta, Ranking Member Johnson, and distinguished members of the subcommittee for allowing me to testify before you today to discuss the role of the National Preparedness System in building and supporting a strong 21<sup>st</sup>-century infrastructure for America. My name is Wendy Smith-Reeve, and I am the Director of the Arizona Department of Emergency and Military Affairs (DEMA) Division of Emergency Management and serve as the President of the National Emergency Management Association (NEMA). NEMA represents the state emergency management directors of all 50 states, eight territories, and the District of Columbia. NEMA's members, many of whom serve as Homeland Security Advisors, are prepared to deal with an ever-changing and increasingly complex set of challenges that test traditional approaches to natural and manmade disasters.

While preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation capabilities are critical on the federal level, one of the most crucial functions FEMA supports is the broader system that helps coordinate the various preparedness efforts across the country and assess their effectiveness in achieving a common goal. The context and environment in which our system must succeed is constantly evolving and intersecting. The National Preparedness System (NPS) is intended to be the beacon that guides critical stakeholders in their quest to be good stewards of grants and other resources provided by taxpayers across the country.

Several emerging issues are forcing the emergency management community to adjust, if not reinvent, its business practices, resource requirements, and assessment tools. The continued commitment of FEMA, state, tribal, local, private sector, and individual stakeholders through the National Preparedness System is essential for supporting a successful all-hazards approach to any emergent situation no matter how small or large.

### **Continue to support the implementation and evolution of PPD-8**

Presidential Policy Directive / PPD-8: National Preparedness recognizes that preparedness is a shared responsibility. At its core, PPD-8 requires the involvement of the whole community—not just the government—in a systematic effort to keep the nation safe from harm and resilient when struck by hazards, such as natural disasters, acts of terrorism and pandemics. All areas encapsulated into National Preparedness are interdependent of one another; therefore, if one area is deficient it has a cascading negative effect on the remaining mission areas.

The policy directive calls on federal departments and agencies to work with the whole community to develop a national preparedness goal and a series of frameworks and plans related to reaching the goal. There is a framework for each of the five mission areas – Prevention, Protection, Mitigation, Response, and Recovery – and these frameworks are essential for implementation of the National Preparedness Goal and are the cornerstone for the overall National Preparedness System.

PPD-8 is organized around key elements:

- The National Preparedness Goal defines the end state success the nation is expected to achieve collaboratively.
- The National Preparedness System (NPS) describes the means to achieve the goal and is a unified effort with six parts: identifying and assessing risk, estimating capability

requirements, building and sustaining capabilities, planning to deliver capabilities, validating capabilities, and reviewing and updating capabilities.

- National Planning Frameworks and Federal Interagency Operational Plans explain the delivery and how we use what we build.
- An annual National Preparedness Report documents the progress made towards achieving the goal. According to FEMA, the most recent NPR incorporates the input of more than 450 data sources and 190 stakeholders, including 66 non-Federal organizations. The NPR includes State Preparedness Reports as required by the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2008 (PKEMRA).
- An ongoing national effort to build and sustain preparedness helps maintain momentum.

The National Preparedness System (NPS) is a practical and effective approach to developing and supporting capabilities. State and local stakeholders were consulted extensively in its development and have fully implemented this system into their planning efforts.

As the foundation of the NPS, the Threat Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA) process informs emergency operations planning, mutual aid agreements, and hazard mitigation planning. Primary stakeholders at the state and local level have been incorporated into the THIRA process to ensure we collaboratively address the full range of threats and hazards facing communities. While not perfect, we believe THIRA and the larger NPS structure has provided a baseline against which we can now measure progress towards a common goal.

Improvements and tweaks will always be needed to ensure the process represents and incorporates the best available data and measures key indicators that communicate the gaps that exist and progress made over time. For example, the THIRA and State Preparedness Report (SPR) are still evolving and require additional fine tuning. States need further clarity on how THIRA and SPR inform FEMA's threat picture and what effect, if any, that has on the allocation of financial resources and other types of support to states. One example of opportunity to improve is evaluation of reporting timelines. An annual analysis does not provide jurisdictions and states enough time in which to adequately measure positive changes affected by the actions taken, as the grants awarded to address the gaps identified the previous year are in the process of execution while the states are working through the following years THIRA/SPR evaluations and reports. Therefore, you won't see measurable change in the metrics as more time between periods of analysis is necessary.

Almost one year ago, GAO testified before the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee and presented various recommendations related to the National Preparedness Report process. They noted that "while many programs exist to build and sustain preparedness capabilities, challenges remain in measuring their progress over time." They alluded to a continued inability to gauge the performance of existing programs. GAO also questioned FEMA's ability to use the THIRA process to develop a set of national capability performance requirements and measures to address concrete capability gaps. These concerns must be addressed, and we look forward to working with FEMA, as we did during the creation of the National Preparedness System, to make collaborative progress in this area and ensure the outcome reflects the current risk landscape and gives a more accurate picture of stakeholder capability in light of that landscape.

As the new Administration and political leadership at DHS and FEMA are appointed, there will obviously be new approaches and priorities that emerge. This reality must be balanced, however, with the need for change to improve outcomes and not succumb to the interest in change for the sake of change. Collectively as a nation, we can't afford to abandon this endeavor in favor of an overhaul that will set us back years in our efforts and accomplishments made to elevate and cooperatively enhance our level of national preparedness. The Administration should sustain and build upon the existing National Preparedness Goal and its support components as they become fully implemented by state and local governments.

#### **Importance of Preparedness Grant Funding for State, Tribal, and Local Stakeholders**

Any emergency manager, first responder, business, or community leader will tell you a planning and coordinating system is worth little without the ability to plan, train, exercise, and execute the capabilities needed to prepare for, respond to, recovery from, and mitigate against all hazards. The implementation tool for the critical functions of the National Preparedness System is the suite of Preparedness Grants administered by FEMA that are essential to state, tribal, and local governments.

Since their inception, NEMA has maintained support of these grants as critical resources to help state and local governments build and sustain capabilities to address the threats and hazards they face. From what we understand, based on the details from the FY18 Budget Blueprint, significant cuts have been proposed to the Preparedness Grant Program. This proposal includes a 20% reduction to the Emergency Management Performance Grant Program (EMPG) and the State Homeland Security Grant Program (SHSGP), which are two critical grant funding streams that our state and local governments depend on annually. It is impossible to imagine a scenario in which those cuts, as significant as they are, do not over time affect and possibly erode the operational capabilities at the state and local level.

Cuts to critical preparedness grant programs impact individual states in substantial ways. Impacts to response and recovery capabilities, however, do not stop at a state's borders. Through mutual aid, facilitated by the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC), any decrease in funding for building homeland security and emergency management capacity reverberates across the nation. EMAC leverages federal emergency management and homeland security grant dollars invested in state and local capabilities to conduct response and recovery operations across the nation. Because of these increased capabilities, the vast majority of disasters are handled without federal assistance, and when a state does become overwhelmed, EMAC is available to provide initial supplemental support.

The proposed cuts are also incongruous with the current threat environment. The threat of terror attacks here in the United States continues to evolve and increase, and communities in every state face the evolving and emerging threats from natural disasters. While the country has made significant strides in our understanding of and preparedness for these events, this isn't the time to scale back those efforts. FEMA's all-hazards focus allows capabilities to be built and utilized in a number of various events ranging from wildfires in the West, Hurricane Matthew response in the East, and response to terror events in Chattanooga, Fort Hood, Boston, and San Bernardino. Each of these events illustrates the need for continued investments in strategic priorities. By

proposing significant cuts for FY18, it is evident our investments since the inception of these grants are at risk, and we look forward to engaging with Congress to better understand how we can balance the need for budget sensitivity with the need for security across the country.

In Arizona, EMPG and SHSGP are crucial in supporting investments that help us in reaching the NPG and are recognized as best-practice activities. The challenge we now face is ensuring these programs are funded at a level that allows them to continue to serve and protect the state as threats to homeland security and critical infrastructure increase and evolve. With SHSGP, this challenge is only compounded by the dramatic decrease in funds the states now receive as compared to past years. In 2008, the State of Arizona was awarded 13.4M in SHSGP funding; in 2015, that number had decreased 66% to 4.57M, despite no noticeable reduction in threats or hazards we face. SHSGP funding has been utilized strategically over its lifespan to build a number of capabilities that either did not previously exist or were inadequate to address the evolving threats facing our nation. In order to keep pace with those evolving threats, this critical funding stream must stay steady or increase, not decrease.

**Implement Preparedness Grant Reform to Streamline Priorities, Address Risk, Increase Flexibility for Emerging Threats, and Measure Progress**

Congress has repeatedly expressed the need for answers to lingering questions about the effectiveness and performance of the suite of FEMA grant programs. In 2012, NEMA developed an innovative approach to grants that goes beyond solely requesting additional funding. NEMA produced a four-page document advocating for the consolidation of the full suite of FEMA's preparedness grants. Key principles and values that were addressed included: supporting PPD-8; building a culture of collaboration; the ability to be agile and adaptive to confront changing hazards; building and sustaining capabilities; encouraging innovation; providing for transparency; and recognizing critical interdependencies.

In the FY13 President's Budget Request, FEMA similarly proposed consolidation of their various grant programs into a National Preparedness Grant Program (NPGP), but the structure had fundamental differences with the NEMA proposal. The reception on Capitol Hill and from many stakeholders was anemic, due in part to the inability of the Department to submit proposed legislative language that would facilitate the actual implementation of the reform and provide detail for the main challenges raised by a number of state and local government organizations.

While the NPGP proposal was not adopted by Congress and no new proposal or complementary action has been submitted forward by FEMA, the reality remains: the current structure for grants is unsustainable. Declining budgets at all levels of government have increased the need to leverage resources and facilitate cross-jurisdictional coordination. We can no longer afford to operate in separate silos. Unfortunately, the current suite of grant programs perpetuates such separations and no longer reflects ongoing efforts to align state and local capabilities with national preparedness objectives.

The current grants structure is complex and often contradictory. This fact 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 so that we can increase the effectiveness of our mission.

Today's dynamic threat environment requires a grant program that prioritizes investments based on risk while maintaining state and local ability to sustain prior investments that support national goals. Grant programs must be flexible and agile to address changing hazards and ensure local investments synchronize with statewide and regional priorities.

Improvements have been made to processes for assessing risk and strategic planning, but the current grant programs design can no longer achieve the type of accountability Congress demands and support the preparedness capabilities our communities need.

Duplicative reporting requirements and increased administrative burden under the current framework also diminish return on investment (ROI) as more time and money must be spent on grants administration and management. Comprehensive reform would better facilitate maximum efficiency of taxpayer dollars and better enable accurate measure of ROI over time. Flexibility with accountability is essential for the success of any efficient and effective taxpayer funded program. Only through comprehensive changes to the existing structure can we achieve a more effective preparedness program for states and locals.

#### **Mitigation as a Function of Proactive Preparedness**

Since FEMA and its partners completed the 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, and has the greatest potential impact on addressing the protection of critical infrastructure from natural or man-made events. Frameworks and preparedness goals cannot be truly representative or actionable if they promulgate stovepipes. Preparedness must be achieved by embracing the unique elements of each mission while understanding and building off their shared goal of resiliency and sustainability.

Mitigation funding has consistently been a fraction of the response and recovery costs that continue to accrue. Between FY2011-2014, the federal government allocated roughly \$222 million for pre-disaster mitigation compared to \$3.2 billion for post-disaster mitigation, a ratio of roughly 1:14. In the aftermath of two separate hurricanes, studies estimated that strong building codes could have significantly reduced damages – saving \$8 billion in Louisiana following Katrina, and \$3.1 billion in Mississippi following a Category 3 event. Photos of the aftermath of disaster clearly show where pre-disaster mitigation efforts and enhanced building codes support community resilience and escalate recovery efforts.

The federal cost share for natural disaster losses has reached an all-time high of 80% from a low of 5% in 1980. If we are to bend this runaway federal cost curve on disasters, we must move away from the current federal disaster spending model towards a system that emphasizes proactive pre-disaster resilience activities. It is a universally accept fact that \$1 of pre-disaster mitigation saves \$4 in losses post-disaster. Amending FEMA's Pre-Disaster Mitigation grant program to receive a new, automatic funding formula enhancement from the Disaster Relief Fund would accomplish this end, and allow us to leverage the cost-savings power of preventative, pre-disaster mitigation by reallocating limited federal resources from the post-disaster, reactive, and wasteful spending model. Incentivizing states to undertake FEMA-approved mitigation activities could be accomplished by adjusting the minimum cost share of a

presidentially declared disaster. This business model shift will make American infrastructure and homes more resilient to natural disasters, better protecting lives and at the same time lowering the future costs of disasters and saving taxpayer dollars.

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. These efforts also help address the issues that an ageing infrastructure presents; not only are we replacing the new systems, we're building them stronger and with a keen eye to avoiding vulnerabilities of the past.

In Arizona, we've leveraged any surplus funding remaining in our Governor's Emergency Fund to support local initiatives to strengthen critical infrastructure and reduce vulnerability. Successful projects have included bank stabilization and fortification in repetitive loss areas, installation of advance warning gauges for flooding, forest thinning, and outreach efforts. We've also identified and implemented measures to improve drainage areas that have resulted in the affected homes no longer being susceptible to flooding, permanently mitigating the future potential recovery expense and risk. These projects were identified and executed at the local level with the support of state funding.

As part of mitigation, we must also insist that the states enact strong building codes to protect American homes and lives, and end the cycle of destruction which has contributed to the now unsustainable federal cost curve. Resilient construction practices save lives. Establishing, implementing, and enforcing strong building codes and incentives will significantly strengthen both public and commercial buildings, as well as private homes for our future generations. Enhanced standards will reduce disaster losses over time, which in turn will decrease federal spending. Tax credits for builders and homeowners, building code enforcement grants to states and localities, and mitigation incentives for states to adopt and enforce strong building codes will prove to be highly effective. This action also presents an opportunity to expand program eligibility and encourage joint public/private mitigation projects. These projects would save future public funds and enhance a community's resilience.

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 reducing the consequences from those disasters in the future.



### **Analyze and Realign Response and Recovery Programs & Delivery of Service to Communities**

When disasters do occur, federal spending to respond to the event and its human impacts is much larger than FEMA and the Disaster Relief Fund. Multiple federal agencies within the federal enterprise are responsible for delivering and managing what has become a fragmented national effort to support communities following disaster. For example: in the wake of Hurricane Sandy, 19 agencies were allocated funds, through appropriations, to implement more than 60 post-disaster recovery programs which were delivered in an unsynchronized and uncoordinated fashion. Similar to the current suite of Preparedness Grants, this fragmentation of post-disaster response and recovery programs creates inefficiencies, diminishes ROI, and more importantly, bureaucratic barriers for those states and communities seeking post-disaster assistance in the form of varying program regulations, application procedures, and time frames.

Building a 21<sup>st</sup> Century National Preparedness System should acknowledge that the federal government's response to disaster needs to be analyzed and streamlined to reduce redundancy, bureaucracy, and un-needed overhead and administrative expense. Together let's analyze and eliminate redundancies and conflicts, and get back to a streamlined and synchronized effort that serves and supports all parties. FEMA was originally created with the intent to serve and support communities impacted by disaster as the single coordinating body for federal assistance. That is no longer the model we have today. Dialing back the fragmented federal effort and streamline all non-FEMA federal disaster assistance administration back to FEMA while incorporating a Benefit Cost Analysis (BCA) protocol for all programs would certainly be a step in the right direction. This would enhance the federal government's capability to focus on quickly and efficiently supporting the communities in their response to, and recovering from disasters and is a proposed solution to the current bifurcated process. States and communities would gladly welcome a seamless and synchronized effort from the federal enterprise.

### **Recommendations for the Future**

As the White House and Congress consider the future of grant reform and engage with stakeholders, NEMA will continue to support efforts to prioritize key components of a grant structure that is measurable, flexible, and sustainable. Any new structure should:

- Value local decision-making and national assessment. An examination of preparedness must not consist solely of broad goals and priorities, but also must form the basis for action. FEMA should continue to improve the State Preparedness Report (SPR) and Threat Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA) process to ensure they provide value to states and local governments. The THIRA should support state efforts to integrate core capabilities thoughtfully and systematically into planning, analysis, and assessment.
- Assess risk continuously across all levels of government. Threat assessment, such as THIRA, must be conducted independent of funding allocations in order to adequately assess the current risk and hazards of a locality, state and region. This must be a continuous process and not a yearly snapshot simply for reporting purposes.

- Encourage strategic plans versus spending plans. The planning process must focus on setting and achieving strategic goals under changing and uncertain conditions. This will allow states to demonstrate progress on filling capability gaps, and as priorities in the state plans are funded, measurable gaps can be identified, addressed, and reported.
- Analyze disaster assistance programs and services available from all federal sources. An analysis should include descriptions of programs, eligibility and authorities, timelines for delivery, target applicant, program parameters, and reporting requirements. Identify duplication of effort, opportunities to streamline programs and processes, and recommend efficiencies that will support the fundamental principles of a long-term sustainable solution for future resiliency.
- Shift the business model from a reactive to proactive posture. We spend far too much money reactively replacing damaged infrastructure to its pre-disaster condition when we should be proactively updating our infrastructure to withstand these events, or building in less vulnerable areas altogether. This should be initiated by the local, state and tribal level of governments with support from federal resources that currently exist.
- Provide consistency and support long-term planning. Grant reform should support FEMA's ability to provide states and subgrantees consistent grant guidance, policy, and funding levels to promote long-term strategic initiatives. These reforms should also include realistic timelines and foster a culture of collaboration among states, local governments and other subgrantees.

#### **Conclusion**

Emergency managers today, at all levels, must be prepared to deal with an ever changing and increasingly complex set of challenges that test traditional approaches to disaster and emergency preparedness and response. The growing number of novel events that can take unexpected turns has prompted greater involvement by emergency management for its capability, experience, and flexibility to deal with issues as they emerge. Regardless of the amount of funding you push towards new priorities, however, the systems, structures, personnel, and capabilities built and sustained through years of dedicated investments must not be neglected.

It's important to acknowledge that increasing the nation's preparedness and response capabilities requires a strong National Preparedness System that facilitates the necessary collaboration, coordination, and structure for all critical stakeholders to achieve a common goal. If national systems are robust and implemented effectively, state, tribal, and local governments can then make the tough decisions related to how best to prioritize investment of critical grant dollars. Decisions regarding where to spend declining grant dollars are best made by those with first-hand knowledge of the threats facing their states and communities around the country.

On behalf of the State of Arizona and NEMA members nationwide, we appreciate the continued support of this subcommittee as we work together to support strong national preparedness that reduces the impact of all-hazards on communities, business, and critical infrastructure across the country. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony, and I look forward to any questions the Subcommittee members may have.

**Questions for the Record – Responses from Wendy Smith-Reeve  
House Transportation and Infrastructure Subcommittee  
Building a 21st Century Infrastructure for America: The National Preparedness System**

**Evaluation, Metrics, and Standards**

1. It is vital that FEMA have end to end standards and metrics and assessments for how actions taken by Federal, State, and local partners contribute to the National Preparedness Goal. In generating the national preparedness report, FEMA requires states to conduct threat and risk assessments. How do we make sure that taxpayer investment is helping make progress toward the National Preparedness Goal? Are there effective grant program metrics that are useful for grantees as well we helpful in the evaluation of our progress toward the National Preparedness Goal? Are there any recommendations on how to improve grant metrics and the evaluation of preparedness?

**Answer:** This question gets to the heart of the current challenges our profession faces. State emergency management and homeland security directors, along with partners across the disaster response community, have worked with FEMA and Congress since the inception of the various preparedness grants to identify the most effective metrics to measure progress towards a common preparedness goal. There have been a number of attempts to quantify and communicate progress towards preparedness over the years but as evidenced by the continuation of this conversation, a single answer has not emerged that meets the needs of Congress, OMB, and others. One major challenge is that we are trying to agree with and establish quantifiable metrics that are both retroactive and prospective in nature. Without metrics and measurement tools in use until well over a decade after the creation of these grants, it is a monumental task to try to illustrate the effectiveness of grants in addressing evolving threat environments since 9/11 and look ahead to identify what programs and processes will continue to measure progress well into the future.

The National Preparedness Goal is, "A secure and resilient Nation with the capabilities required across the whole community to prevent, protect against, mitigate, respond to, and recover from the threats and hazards that pose the greatest risk." The goal is a lofty one but it is essential to the overall resilience of communities across the country and every one of my colleagues agrees with the end goal that has been identified.

There have been attempts to identify current risk (THIRA), assess current capabilities and preparedness levels (State Preparedness Reports, National Preparedness Report, Gap Analysis Program), and assess capabilities built with specific grant allocations (Grant Reporting Tool). In order to truly identify preparedness levels and understand if and when the nation is prepared, FEMA has developed tools to identify the critical capabilities that must be built in order to facilitate preparedness at the State and local level (Target Capabilities List, Core Capabilities). There are a number of challenges with the current Core Capabilities list including criticism that the capabilities are difficult to quantify and too subjective and that these capabilities are based on targets that do not recognize the unique threats, hazards, and needs of communities throughout the country.

The Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA) is a four step common risk assessment process that helps the whole community understand its risks and estimate

capability requirements. While THIRA is not perfect, it is the most current developed assessment tool, and the state, local, and tribal emergency management community should continue to work with FEMA to improve this process to the extent possible.

NEMA membership recommends shifting the THIRA reporting requirement from reporting on an annual basis to a minimum of biannually to every three years in order to allow enough time to pass which demonstrates progress based upon project completion that addresses identified gaps. In addition, continued discussions and review of the metrics and progress towards aligning metrics, gaps, and investments must be pursued.

#### Cost Share

2. The numerous federal disaster preparedness grant programs available to states and localities have different cost shares, ranging from 50 percent with the Emergency Management Performance Grant to zero with the Urban Area Security Initiative Grant. Should grant recipients have some "skin in the game" when it comes to the investment of taxpayer dollars, to incentivize responsible emergency planning? Should cost shares be the same across the spectrum of preparedness grants or should there be some sort of in-kind allowance? Should rural grant applicants have different match requirements than urban applicants?

**Answer:** While there is no comprehensive study of nationwide investment in all-hazards preparedness, I know for a fact states, localities, tribes, and others already have "skin in the game." Investments are being made every day at all levels of government, as well as within the private sector. We are aware of proposals, including the most recent in the President's FY18 Budget Proposal to include cost match on grants that do not currently have one. If this strategy is pursued, we believe there are ways to implement a cost match that recognizes the great work already being done and giving credit to states and localities through a soft match. A hard cash match may be difficult to implement while still ensuring that all communities (small, rural, financially threatened, or other vulnerable locations) can continue to leverage federal grants essential for achieving national preparedness.

It is possible that with a drive to require hard match without recognizing current commitments via soft match, that our level of national preparedness will suffer as a direct result. Communities plan for and budget to the level of preparedness required based upon the risks facing their communities. What has happened since 9/11 through the National Preparedness Initiative is a response to the call for support and assistance at the lowest foundational level across this great nation, to ensure that we are all rising up toward the cause in support of defending against the threats of terrorism in our communities. This effort will most likely suffer, and the cascading impact will be a reduction in our level of National Preparedness, should we not collectively recognize the financial commitment that already exists within our state, local and tribal communities.

If there is a need to adjust cost match for grants that currently are at 100% funding levels, NEMA recommends that these adjustment be phased in, in order to sustain our current and future levels of National Preparedness. To do otherwise could result in our nation being caught 'flat footed', as communities will be forced to choose between preparing for the risk associated with their community demographics vs the risk of foreign actors looking to demonstrate an aggressive action toward our nation.

Grants Management System and FEMA Interaction

3. FEMA currently uses a complicated and antiquated grants-management system that is not able to easily track data or catch potential duplications. While FEMA has committed to modernizing this system over the next three to five years, does the way that FEMA manages non-disaster grants pose challenges to state and local governments? Are there any concerns from states or locals about interaction with FEMA, the Grants Program Directorate, or DHS?

**Answer:** The management of grants and the burdensome structure of the current grants reporting tools are of great concern to state homeland security and emergency management officials. The current systems are difficult to use and require an inordinate amount of time to manage for already stretched personnel within our offices. In addition, the information collected, while often helpful, is not necessarily, in our opinion, utilized in a meaningful way; and FEMA often asks for information multiple times.

In 2016, FEMA managed more than 40 active grant programs to support the Homeland Security Department's missions of prevention, protection, and response and recovery. These grants were managed through a combination of IT systems; the largest being Emergency Management Mission Integrated Environment (EMMIE) grant tracking program. FEMA does not plan to make any enhancements or improvements to EMMIE's functionality because the system is scheduled to be decommissioned once the FEMA's Grants Management Modernization system, the enterprise-wide capability for the management of all FEMA disaster and non-disaster grants, is finally implemented. According to a GAO report from 2016, the EMMIE officials they interviewed indicated the implementation date is estimated to occur in 2020.

In testimony provided by former FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate in 2015, the Administrator highlighted the work FEMA is planning to do and said "The current systems do not sufficiently reconcile, scale, or meet the current and future demands for real-time data analytics and reporting requirements of FEMA and its whole community partners. This initiative would transform the Agency's current suite of aging, stove-piped, non-interoperable and technologically obsolete grants management systems into a modern grants management environment that seamlessly integrates with FEMA's financial systems. This investment will promote accountability, transparency, and standardization in accomplishing FEMA's mission in the regions and at headquarters while making our systems easier for grant recipients to use."

While the promise of this EMMIE system, as with FEMA's predecessor grant management systems (NEMIS and ADAMS), was that the data found within all of the systems would upload and provide FEMA and states the ability to have all of the historical data that exists, we are still waiting for that information. It is obvious that there is a great deal of analysis that could be done to advance the understanding of grant effectiveness as well as better ensure grant dollars are being used efficiently in a manner that avoids waste and possible duplication of effort. Until a system can be built that actually delivers on the historical data that does actually exist within the multiple FEMA data systems, we will continue to be in

the dark as a nation and continue to throw hard earned tax payer dollars against efforts that have potentially already been paid for on multiple occasions.

**We cannot, as a nation, together work toward efficient and accountable government at all levels until the systems that we rely upon can produce the data promised and required to appropriately govern at the lowest levels of government.**

Additional Legislative Changes

4. How can Congress utilize legislative changes and oversight to improve the National Preparedness System and to give states and locals the necessary tools to build the capabilities to prepare for, respond to, recover from, and mitigate against emergencies and disasters of all kinds?

**Answer: Much of the improvements, advancements, and reforms to the National Preparedness System could be made through FEMA policy or regulation. Changes and improvements can be made to the State Preparedness Repot (SPR) and THIRA processes simply by incorporating feedback from State and local stakeholders. One way Congress can be helpful is to require a comprehensive review of preparedness spending across the various levels of government, review controls in place for duplicative, repetitive, or improper grants payments, and to endorse realistic limits on reporting structures that end up causing heavy workloads and mistrust between grantees and subgrantees.**



*Written Statement for the Record*

**Nick Crossley, CEM, CPM**  
**Director, Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency**  
**Hamilton County, Ohio**

**On behalf of the International Association of Emergency Managers and  
the National Association of Counties**

**For the hearing: "Building a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Infrastructure for America: The National  
Preparedness System"**

**Before the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure's  
Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Management  
U.S. House of Representatives**

**March 16, 2017  
Washington, D.C.**

Thank you, Chairman Barletta, Ranking Member Johnson and members of the U.S. House of Representatives' Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure's Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Management for this opportunity to testify on America's Infrastructure and the National Preparedness System.

My name is Nick Crossley, and I am the Director of the Hamilton County, Ohio, Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency. I have been a Certified Emergency Manager for 15 years, and I appear before you today in my dual roles as First Vice President of the International Association of Emergency Managers and as a member of the National Association of Counties' Justice and Public Safety Policy Steering Committee.

***About IAEM***

The International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM), which has more than 6,000 members worldwide, is a non-profit educational organization dedicated to promoting the "Principles of Emergency Management" and representing those professionals whose goals are saving lives and protecting property and the environment during emergencies and disasters.

***About NACo***

NACo is the only national organization that represents county governments in the United States, including Alaska's boroughs and Louisiana's parishes. Founded in 1935, NACo assists America's 3,069 counties in pursuing excellence in public service to produce healthy, vibrant, safe and resilient communities.

***Counties and the Local Role in Emergency Management***

Counties are highly diverse, not only in my state of Ohio, but across the nation, and vary immensely in natural resources, social and political systems, cultural, economic and structural circumstances, and public health and environmental responsibilities. Counties range in area from 26 square miles (Arlington County, Virginia) to 87,860 square miles (North Slope Borough, Alaska). The population of counties varies from Loving County, Texas, with just under 100 residents, to Los Angeles County, California, which has a population that, at close to ten million people, exceeds that of most states. Overall, of our nation's 3,069 counties, approximately 50 percent have populations below 25,000. At the same time, there are more than 120 major urban counties, which collectively provide essential services to more than 130 million people each day. If you've seen one county, you've seen one county, and there are 3,068 more to go.

Counties also often serve as our nation's first line of defense before and after disasters strike. While state statutes and organizational structures vary, local emergency management responsibilities are most commonly vested in county governments. Following a disaster, local emergency managers are often first on the scene and play a key role in coordinating local emergency management efforts and working to mitigate damage from disasters. Other key county staff involved in pre- and post-disaster efforts include local police, sheriffs, firefighters, 911 call center staff, public health officials and public records and code inspectors. In the aftermath of disasters, we coordinate and help fund clean-up, recovery and rebuilding so that our residents can return to their lives as quickly as possible.

Furthermore, because counties are major owners of public infrastructure, we are also uniquely positioned to mitigate against disasters before they occur, so that their impact on our communities and residents' lives is decreased. Collectively, we own 45 percent of America's roads, nearly 40 percent of bridges, 960 hospitals, more than 2,500 jails, more than 650 nursing homes and a third of the nation's



airports. We also own and maintain a wide variety of public safety infrastructure, including roadside ditches, flood control channels, stormwater culverts and pipes, Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4), and other infrastructure used to funnel water away from low-lying roads, properties and businesses.

I come before you today as a representative of not just IAEM and NACo, but the entire profession of emergency management practitioners – the profession dedicated to protecting America’s local communities from natural and man-made disasters. As emergency managers, we strive daily to create and perfect systems of coordination and communication that save lives and minimize damage to property and infrastructure when our communities are struck by disaster.

Chairman Barletta, in Luzerne County, Pennsylvania, Emergency Management Director Lucille Morgan spends most of her waking hours preparing for floods along the Susquehanna River – a recurring problem she has helped to manage multiple times during her 24-year career with the county’s emergency management agency.

Congressman Johnson, in DeKalb County, Emergency Management Director Sue Loeffler is tasked with preparing for disasters in a county that houses the busiest airport in the world and the headquarters of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Sue works daily not just to help ensure the safe transport of various bio-hazards, including the Ebola virus, to and from CDC headquarters, but also to prepare the community’s response to accidental introduction of these lethal bio-hazards into the community.

90 minutes south of DeKalb, the Troup County, Georgia emergency manager faces an annual tornado season, and the Chattahoochee River occasionally floods Congressman Ferguson’s hometown of West Point. Emergency managers in Los Angeles County plan for the inevitable earthquakes that are a constant threat to Congresswoman Napolitano’s constituents who live near the San Andreas Fault.

Chairman Barletta and members of the subcommittee, local emergency management agencies are at the center of our nation’s preparation for, response to and recovery from disasters both large and small. We are committed to creating a culture of preparedness that builds and sustains a disaster-resistant and resilient America.

#### ***The Local Perspective on the National Preparedness System***

While local emergency managers’ mission of protecting America’s communities from disaster is carried out at the local level and largely with local and state resources, we are grateful to be a part of today’s conversation because we know that our efforts are more impactful, and our communities more resilient, with the support and partnership of the federal government. The National Preparedness System, and specifically the Emergency Management Performance Grant program, or EPMG, have over the last decade become pivotal pillars of support for efficient and effective emergency management at the local level.

Through EPMG, the federal government supports the development, evaluation, implementation and administration of local Emergency Operations Plans in a manner that best suits the needs of each community and its unique set of disaster threats. But the grant program does not only help us protect our *own* communities – it enables local emergency management agencies to support and assist each other when disasters strain our individual capacities. EPMG also helps states coordinate this support and assistance among counties, both within and across state lines, ultimately creating a national emergency management structure that helps to save lives and lessen the physical and financial impact of disasters.

Over the last decade, this structure of support and assistance has strengthened our nation's response to some of the most destructive disasters that have devastated our communities, in a documented and measurable manner. To cite just one example, after Superstorm Sandy struck in 2012, Ramsey County, Minnesota sent emergency management practitioners trained under EMPG to New York to reinforce the efforts of overwhelmed state and local emergency management agencies. Without EMPG, this sort of interstate coordination and assistance simply would not have happened, and the short and long-term impact of the storm on our nation would have been even greater.

***The Impact of Potential Cuts to Emergency Management Grants***

Ramsey County's assistance to state and local emergency management agencies during Superstorm Sandy is the Emergency Management Performance Grant in action – increasing our nation's resiliency to disaster by fostering a structure of emergency management support and assistance that crosses local and state lines. A weakened EMPG program would make this structure weaker and less sustainable. This would not only result in greater damage to life, property and infrastructure when disasters strike, but would also substantially increase the need for post-disaster aid from the federal government. Because of this, cuts to EMPG are shortsighted from a budgetary standpoint and counterproductive to the goals of the National Preparedness System.

Furthermore, as budgetary and policy priorities are reorganized under a new presidential administration, it is imperative that we closely assess the potential impact of these changes on local emergency management agencies, so that our pivotal role in keeping America's communities safe is not made more difficult. As outlined above, EMPG and other federal grant programs that local governments utilize to strengthen our ongoing efforts to protect communities improve the nation's resiliency to disaster in a systemic, documented and measurable manner. Weakening these programs will make America more vulnerable to natural and man-made disasters, regardless of how the savings achieved in this manner are reinvested.

Similarly, potential withholding of federal funds from local emergency management agencies that are deemed to be a part of "sanctuary jurisdictions" would diminish our nation's public safety and exacerbate an already difficult situation faced by counties across the country, regardless of their demographics or political leaning. Federal courts have repeatedly ruled that counties risk violating the Fourth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution when they honor federal immigration detainers that do not clearly demonstrate probable cause. If the federal executive or legislative branches impose penalties on counties who do not honor detainers without probable cause, counties are effectively receiving contradictory messages from different branches of the federal government. Depending on which message we conform to, we are either inviting lengthy and costly lawsuits, or risking the loss of critical federal support. Forcing counties into this difficult position is certainly unfair, and potentially unconstitutional.

***Conclusion***

The National Preparedness System and the Emergency Management Performance Grant program have proven to be invaluable pillars of support for local and state emergency management practitioners who are entrusted with the sacred responsibility of preserving the health and safety of America's local communities in the face of disasters both natural and man-made. Congress should, and must, continue to fully fund the program. Thank you, Chairman Barletta, Ranking Member Johnson and members of the subcommittee for the opportunity to testify before you today.

**“Building a 21st Century Infrastructure for America: The National Preparedness System”  
Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Management  
Thursday, March 16, 2017, 10:00 a.m.  
2167 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C.**

**Questions for the Record to Nick Crossley**

*Submitted on behalf of Representative Lou Barletta (PA-11)*

**Evaluation, Metrics and Standards**

1. It is vital that FEMA have end-to-end standards and metrics and assessments for how actions taken by federal, state, and local partners contribute to the National Preparedness Goal. In generating the national preparedness report, FEMA requires states to conduct threat and risk assessments. How do we make sure that taxpayer investment is helping make progress toward the National Preparedness Goal? Are there effective grant program metrics that are useful for grantees as well as helpful in the evaluation of our progress toward the National Preparedness Goal? Are there any recommendations on how to improve grant metrics and the evaluation of preparedness?

**ANSWER:** End-to-end standards: FEMA has invested a lot of time and money in the Emergency Management Standard administered by EMAP. Also extant is the National Fire Protection Association 1600 standard (NFPA 1600). In the opinion of IAEM-USA, the first step is for FEMA to formally endorse the use of the Emergency Management Standard, with NFPA as an allowable alternate. We can assess capability and readiness in EM-centric activity, with a refreshed THIRA process for the Homeland Security-centric areas.

Metrics: IAEM-USA believes the Emergency Management Performance Grant program (EMPG) provides metrics that are useful for grantees as well as helpful in the evaluation of our progress toward the National Preparedness Goal.

Recommendations: (1) UASI and SHSGP as basic anti-terror capability building should be assessed to ensure that context based analysis does not become simply scenario-based planning. But, otherwise, it is a good concept. It directs spending towards achievable and intentional goals. (2) Recognize that the relationship for both EM and HLS is NOT really different. The principles of EM serve the HLS goals and vice versa. We need to stop the assumption that homeland = law enforcement, and EM = nothing major. The concept is that local assets provide the capacity for national capabilities and we need to maintain and build these.

**National Preparedness Report**

1. In your opinion, is the National Preparedness Report an accurate reflection of the state of preparedness across the country? Does it accurately incorporate the “whole community” and the strengths and weaknesses at every level of government? How could the report be improved to more accurately reflect capability gaps?

**ANSWER:** No...the National Preparedness Report is not an accurate reflection of the state of preparedness across the country. The states have multiple methods of doing their THIRAs. The quality of the data is not uniform, and it does not always extend to every county/big-city. The needs of a state don't necessarily mirror the needs of any specific political subdivision and are subject to party politics. Finally, the local governments do not necessarily have the expertise to provide the data (part time EMA directors, EMA directors who are far down the chains of command, etc.). This goes to the overall need for a national EM standard -- which EXISTS.

*Submitted on behalf of Representative Brian J. Mast (FL-18)*

**Port Preparedness**

1. The state of Florida is served by 15 seaports, including the Port of Fort Pierce in the 18<sup>th</sup> Congressional District, and preparedness capabilities vary greatly from port to port. Is there a relationship between preparedness capability and port size? Should the federal government be doing more to help our largest ports of entry, or are we underinvesting in preparedness resources for mid-sized and smaller ports?

**ANSWER:** Certainly there is need to invest in Port security (thus the Port Security grant program). However, the consistent message is this...at the port they can screen some percentage of cargo/persons. But, if an incident occurs, there is a need for capability to handle it. That capability rests at the local level.

**Testimony by Joseph Lawless  
Director of Maritime Security  
Massachusetts Port Authority  
On behalf of the  
American Association of Port Authorities (AAPA)**

**"Building a 21st Century Infrastructure for America: The National  
Preparedness System"**

**Subcommittee on Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public  
Buildings and Emergency Management  
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure**

**Thursday, March 17, 2017  
10:00 a.m.  
2167 Rayburn House Office Building**

Thank you, Chairman Barletta, and Ranking Member Johnson for convening this important and timely hearing. My name is Joseph Lawless. I am the Director of Maritime Security at the Massachusetts Port Authority (MASSPORT) and I am here today on behalf of the American Association of Port Authorities where I am the Chairman of the Security Committee.

Since 9/11, port security remains a top priority for U.S. ports. Safe and secure seaport facilities are fundamental to protecting our borders and moving goods. Protecting the people and freight that move through seaports and surrounding communities is essential to keeping seaports safe and open for business. With 98 percent of overseas trade flowing through U.S. ports, a terrorist incident at a port could have a drastic impact on the U.S. economy.

A key component of our nation's preparedness system has been the Port Security Grant Program. Since 2002, over \$3 billion in port security grants have been appropriated. This is a vital funding source for port authorities and our partners to pay for unfunded mandates that have been put in place since 9/11.

**AAPA is very concerned about the rumored budget cuts to the Port Security Grant Program in the Administration's budget that is being released today. A 40% cut to the Port Security Grant Program would have a devastating and cascading impact on our security, supply chain and safety of our communities.**

Under the SAFE Port Act, this program was authorized at \$400 million. Unfortunately, the funding for this program has decreased, currently standing at a dangerously low level of \$100 million. As costs of systems, maintenance and equipment continue to rise, and security threats continue to

evolve, this level of funding will bring into question the sustainability of the protection levels we have worked so hard to build over the last fifteen years.

Port Security Grant funds have helped port facilities and port areas to strengthen facility security and work in partnership with other agencies to enhance the security of the region. Port Security Grant funding has been used to procure equipment such as vessels and vehicles, install detection systems such as cameras and sensors, and provide equipment maintenance for the systems recently installed. It also provides funding for 24/7 patrols and response.

*For example, at my Port, the Port of Boston, we use port security grants to bolster our critical infrastructure by obtaining and installing radar intrusion detection systems, cameras, biometric access control and identification systems, active shooter detection systems and cybersecurity assessment tools. We have enhanced our Emergency Management and Response capabilities by equipping law enforcement bomb squads with Explosive ordnance disposal robots, advanced x-ray systems, bomb containment vessels and preventative radiation and nuclear detection devices.*

As Chairman of the AAPA Security Committee, I know that ports around the country have also utilized these funds to confront the multitude of physical and cyber security vulnerabilities that challenge the vitality of our maritime transportation network.

At the port of Los Angeles, for example, port security grant funding has gone to:

- Installing over 400 cameras and 250 access control panels including infrared capable of viewing objects three miles from the port entry.
- Building a Cyber Security Operations Center to monitor and respond to over 550,000 monthly internet attacks on the port's business network.

*In Florida, the Tampa Port Authority have used Port Security Grants funds to purchase an innovative floating barrier system that was designed and manufactured in Florida. The system is designed to prevent a waterborne attack by a small vessel carrying an improvised explosive device. The system can be deployed in less than an hour by port security and law enforcement, as compared to traditional systems deployed by contractors that take hours or days. Channels under the jurisdiction of the Port Authority are used to deliver over 43% of all motor vehicle fuel used by Florida's citizens and visitors. This investment has the potential to protect high value targets against the evolving threat of improvised waterborne explosives carried by small vessels.*

Security challenges are never stagnant. Cybersecurity is a prime example of an emerging security threat since 9/11. Ports are working with their stakeholders in addressing this very complex issue. And the Port Security Grant Program remains vital in assisting ports in addressing cybersecurity challenges by providing resources for cyber assessments.

If Congress, were to make tweaks to the FEMA Port Security Grant Program as has been discussed by other Committees of jurisdiction, we would recommend the following:

- Fund and authorize the Port Security Grant Program (PSGP) at the **\$400 million level or maintain the current \$100 level.**
- **Increase \$1M Project Limit to \$5,000,000** per project. Increasing the limit on costs eligible for funding would address the cost of acquisition and installation as well as the sustainment and maintenance of security equipment and systems has significantly increased since the prior authorization (2005). This would address most of the multiyear funding issues that have been raised in the past as well.
- A 36-month grant performance period is the minimum needed for ports to successfully design, implement and test projects to ensure maximum improvements to port security and operational capability.
- We encourage Congress to continue to emphasize a risk based funding strategy for PSGP. The Port Security Grant Program funding should be focused on the highest risk ports in the nation in terms of consequence, vulnerability, and economic impact.
- Reduce or eliminate the 25% cost match required for government entities such as port authorities, police departments, and fire agencies.
- Keep the PSGP where it is. Do not block grant or consolidate this program. FEMA has done an excellent job administering this program. Port Security Grants are managed quite differently than other homeland security grants. Priorities are set locally, based on the risks and vulnerability of the local port area. Other homeland security grants have a list of core capabilities, which all grantees try to attain. This capabilities list is based more on movable and shared assets rather than set facilities. There is no such list of core capabilities for port security grants and the ones developed for other grant programs were not developed with ports in mind. Additionally, ports have certain federal mandates, such as Transportation Worker Identification Card (TWIC) and the recently released TWIC Reader Rule, which goes into effect in the coming year.

Additionally, I would be remiss if I did not state that funding CBP and ensuring that ports are staffed with a sufficient level of CBP officers is critical for a safe and secure supply chain. CBP officers augment everything that the port security grant program does. In FY 2015, when CBP was funded to hire 2,000 staff, fewer than 20 officers were assigned to seaports. We cannot let this disproportionate approach to security continue. Our nation's seaports handle more than 11 million maritime containers and over 11 million international passengers each year.

Finally, we have been a remarkably well prepared industry when it comes to security. As a security professional, we value partnerships, leverage funding and keep security as priority. The FEMA Port Security Grant Program has been a vital tool in keeping our ports, supply chain and communities safe.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify this morning and I look forward to any questions that you may have.

**“Building a 21st Century Infrastructure for America: The National Preparedness System”**  
**Thursday, March 16, 2017, 10:00 a.m.**  
**2167 Rayburn House Office Building**  
**Washington, D.C.**

**Questions for the Record for Joseph Lawless, Director of Maritime Security,**  
**Massachusetts Port Authority**

*Submitted on behalf of Representative Lou Barletta (PA-11)*

Evaluation, Metrics and Standards

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

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*Submitted on behalf of Representative Brian Mast (FL-18)*

Port Preparedness

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



INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIRE FIGHTERS



Statement of

MR. ART MARTYNUSKA

PRESIDENT, PENNSYLVANIA PROFESSIONAL FIRE  
FIGHTERS ASSOCIATION

before the

SUBCOMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, PUBLIC  
BUILDINGS, and EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

on

BUILDING A 21<sup>st</sup> CENTURY INFRASTRUCTURE FOR  
AMERICA: THE NATIONAL PREPAREDNESS SYSTEM

MARCH 16, 2017

Thank you Chairman Barletta, Ranking Member Johnson and distinguished members of the Subcommittee. My name is Art Martynuska and I am the President of the Pennsylvania Professional Fire Fighters Association. I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you today on behalf of the International Association of Fire Fighters, General President Schaitberger and the over 300,000 fire fighters and emergency medical personnel who serve as this nation's first line of defense against disasters, natural or man-made.

Whenever and wherever disaster strikes, America's professional fire fighters and emergency medical personnel are on the frontlines working to save lives and protect the public safety. Today's fire service has evolved from a municipal force whose primary duty was to extinguish local fires to an integrated national system that responds to a wide range of local emergencies and national disasters. When the nation faces a terrorist attack, natural disaster, pandemic, hazardous materials spill, or any mass-casualty event, it is local fire fighters who respond. It is from this unique perspective as America's frontline domestic defenders that we view the federal government's preparedness efforts.

The horrific events of September 11, 2001 shook our nation to the core, and Congress responded appropriately by creating the Department of Homeland Security and establishing new programs to protect the nation. But these laws did more than create a new bureaucracy, they fundamentally altered the way our nation views emergency response and preparedness.

Before 9/11, emergency response and preparedness was understood to be almost an exclusively local government function. The federal role in emergency management was largely confined to recovery after a major disaster, with FEMA helping families, communities and businesses rebuild once the life-saving emergency response functions were completed.

The September 11 tragedy forced us to face the deficiencies of this outmoded view and prompted us to create a new paradigm partnering federal, state and local governments to better protect our communities. Under this partnership, local emergency responders came to understand that our responsibilities lie beyond the jurisdictional boundaries of our municipality. Perhaps even more importantly, fire fighters came to understand that his or her job is not merely protecting communities from local incidents, but to play an integral role in protecting all Americans against terrorist attacks and other major disasters.

The federal government's role in this new partnership is two-fold. First, it must be able to marshal all available resources, including the assets offered by the nation's fire services, to respond to these events. And second, in order to fulfill this obligation, the federal government must be willing to ensure that local emergency response agencies have the training, equipment and preparation they need to successfully execute their missions.

#### **SAFER and FIRE Grants**

Clearly, in order to successfully mitigate a broad palate of operational responsibilities, the fire service must maintain a continuous state of preparedness. This continues to be a difficult task to achieve as we continue to slowly recover from the recent recession. Unfortunately, while

engaged in their essential duties, fire fighters are too often expected to work with outdated equipment, minimal training and insufficient personnel.

The Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) and Assistance to Firefighters (FIRE) grant programs were created by Congress to help address these needs and keep fire fighters and fire departments in an ever-ready state of preparedness. Providing funds to communities large and small throughout the nation, SAFER and FIRE have proved to be highly effective. A study by the U.S. Fire Administration revealed that the grants have resulted in important enhancements in local preparedness, including increased and improved equipment and training.

For example, the Philadelphia Fire Department has struggled for years with a depleted fire fighting force. Insufficient personnel is equated with increased response times and increased risk to communities and their citizens. In 2015, I am pleased to say that the City of Philadelphia Fire Department received a SAFER grant of \$22.6 million, allowing the department to add 160 fire fighters to their depleted rolls, enhancing safety and significantly reducing risk. Similar examples abound nationwide.

In addition to providing their effectiveness, the grants are highly efficient. By utilizing a peer review process and awarding funds directly to fire departments, SAFER and FIRE grants go to those communities where they are most needed, with a minimum of overhead.

Yet, despite the clear improvements in fire department preparedness produced by these grants, there remains a strong need for additional funding. According to a 2016 Needs Assessment of the Fire Service conducted by the National Fire Protection Association, shortages in personnel, equipment and training persist in many fire departments. Fire departments are continually updating equipment, training is required on a recurring basis, staffing costs continue to rise. Although SAFER and FIRE Grants have allowed departments to make headway against long-standing shortages, many departments are swimming against a rising tide.

In Fiscal Year 2016 Congress appropriated a combined \$690 million for SAFER and FIRE, a reduction from the programs' traditional funding level of \$810 million. In Fiscal Year 2016, nearly 10,000 fire departments applied for more than \$2 billion in FIRE grants, and for Fiscal Year 2015 over 1300 fire departments applied for more than \$1 billion in SAFER grants. By allowing more grantees to earn grants, we believe a small investment to restore funding to the traditional \$810 million level would significantly enhance fire department preparedness.

#### **Homeland Security Grants**

In addition to SAFER and FIRE, we believe the Homeland Security grants, particularly the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) and the State Homeland Security Grant Program (SHSGP) have been largely beneficial to enhancing the nation's preparedness. UASI, which funds preparedness activities in large urban areas, has been particularly important to improving the overall

preparedness of the nation's fire service. This is particularly true since Congress enacted the 9/11 Commission Act, which expanded the ability of states and localities to use UASI and SHSGP funds for personnel costs, and required states to make SHSGP and UASI funds available to localities within forty-five days of receiving funds, expediting their use by local fire departments.

Although each of these programs serves an important public safety need, shrinking budgets are limiting their effectiveness. In Fiscal Year 2016, Congress allocated \$580 million for UASI and \$402 million for SHSGP. We are concerned with this trend and warn that, if continued, it would have a significant negative impact on our nation's preparedness.

Additionally, in recent years, the previous Administration proposed consolidating the Homeland Security grants, including SHSGP and UASI. We rejected this proposal, as did Congress. The Homeland Security grants were each established in order to serve a very specific and important public safety need. Given the limited federal funding afforded to the grants, merging distinct and equally-important homeland security priorities into a single block grant could cause some such priorities to go unserved. We hope this proposal is not resurrected under the current Administration, and urge it be rejected again if it is.

#### **Urban Search and Rescue**

As you know, the National Urban Search and Rescue (US&R) Response System provides a significant national resource for search and rescue assistance in the wake of a major disaster or structural collapse. A typical US&R task force will conduct physical search and rescue operations, provide emergency medical care to trapped victims, assess and control hazards such as ruptured gas and electric lines, and evaluate and stabilize damaged structures. Due to the critical, life-saving nature of their mission, US&R task forces must be prepared to deploy within six hours of notification, and must be self-sufficient for the first seventy-two hours. US&R teams have been deployed to numerous disasters in the United States, including Superstorm Sandy, Hurricane Katrina, and of course, the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon. They are a phenomenal resource and highly successful.

I know this Subcommittee values the significant work of our nation's US&R teams, and I would be remiss if I did not thank you for your work last year to pass the National Urban Search and Rescue Response System Act of 2016. This legislation, which has been a priority for our members for nearly a decade, not only provides US&R with the protections of law, it better protects US&R team members by clarifying members' workers compensation, liability protections and jobs, and specifies that local sponsoring agencies may receive federal reimbursement for back-filled positions. It is a significant achievement by this Subcommittee and we appreciate your tireless efforts that resulted in this bill becoming law.

Unfortunately, and despite the importance of the program, the Urban Search and Rescue Response System is desperately underfunded, and becomes more so each year. In 2006, the Federal Emergency Management Agency estimated the annual and recurring cost for each task force to be approximately \$1.7 million. Today, in many jurisdictions, the cost exceeds \$2 million. In addition to program management costs, this estimate includes expenses for training, exercises, medical monitoring of personnel, and equipment maintenance and storage. For Fiscal Year 2016, Congress only appropriated

\$35.18 million for all twenty-eight teams, leaving local sponsoring agencies and local taxpayers to pick up the remainder of the tab.

Unfortunately, tight local budgets have left many local sponsoring agencies unable to subsidize critical US&R functions such as training, significantly straining task forces' readiness and capabilities. In fact, some teams have been so underfunded that they have been unable to respond to emergencies when called upon.

Additionally, when local communities are forced to assume an ever-increasing share of such costs, funds are inevitably diverted from local emergency services budgets. Thus, a failure to fund an inherently federal function actually detracts from local emergency preparedness.

Adequately funding the Urban Search and Rescue Response System would significantly improve our nation's readiness. For the past several years, the IAFF has recommended funding US&R at a minimum of \$50 million. This small investment would yield significant returns in ensuring teams are prepared to conduct critical, life-saving search and rescue operations in the wake of a disaster.

#### **Potential Funding Challenges**

These and other programs allow the federal government to enhance preparedness at both the local and national level, assisting fire fighters and others so that they can adequately provide the first line of defense protecting our local communities and their citizens.

We are concerned with reports that funding for homeland security grants and other priorities within the Department of Homeland Security may be cut under the new Administration's budget. We recognize that hard choices must be made when deciding how to allocate taxpayer dollars. However, despite the many challenges facing the federal budget, it is fundamentally unwise to cut spending on homeland security funds to state and local governments. As the first line of defense in protecting our homeland, the federal government has an inherent responsibility to help ensure local fire departments can effectively protect the public safety. We caution Congress against any attempts to cut funding for these essential programs. Such cuts would surely result in critical gaps in fire fighters ability to quickly and effectively respond to emergencies, significantly undermining our nation's preparedness.

#### **Conclusion**

On behalf of the International Association of Fire Fighters, I appreciate the opportunity to share with you our views on the national preparedness system. As a nation, we have made significant positive progress since 9/11 to enhance readiness and capabilities. We must continue to build upon this framework and resist suggestions to cut or underfund programs that are essential to our national security and well-being. To the extent that the IAFF can assist the Subcommittee in these efforts, I am happy to offer our expertise and pledge to work closely with you and your staffs.

Again, I'd like to thank the Subcommittee for the opportunity to testify today and am happy to answer any questions you may have.

**“Building a 21st Century Infrastructure for America: The National Preparedness System”**  
**Thursday, March 16, 2017, 10:00 a.m.**  
**2167 Rayburn House Office Building**  
**Washington, D.C.**

**Questions for the Record for Art Martynuska, President,**  
**Pennsylvania Professional Fire Fighters Association**

*Submitted on behalf of Representative Lou Barletta (PA-11):*

**Threat and Hazard Identification Risk Assessment**

1. The recipients of the Homeland Security grant programs are required to complete an annual Threat and Hazard Identification Risk Assessment, (THIRA) as a tool to help identify certain gaps in their capabilities that may exist. Most of this effort seems to be concentrated at the state-level, which may leave locals insufficiently engaged in the state THIRA process. As we know, all disasters are local, and it is our first responders that will be the first on the ground for any incident. With this in mind, are local stakeholders being included as equal partners in this process? What recommendations do you have to improve the THIRA program and to ensure that locals are more engaged and local capability gaps are more correctly accounted for?

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

**National Preparedness Report**

1. In your opinion, is the National Preparedness Report an accurate reflection of the state of preparedness across the country? Does it accurately incorporate the “whole community” and the strengths and weaknesses at every level of government? How could the report be improved to more accurately reflect capability gaps?

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

**Fusion Centers**

1. Based on your experience, how far along is the federal government in implementing the information-sharing process, not only with FBI and DHS but the Joint Terrorism Task Forces and the fusion centers? Is the information-sharing process where it needs to be, or does it need to be reformed?

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

**Cost Share**

1. The numerous federal disaster preparedness grant programs available to states and localities have different cost shares, ranging from 50 percent with the Emergency Management Performance Grant to zero with the Urban Area Security Initiative Grant. Should grant recipients have some “skin in the game” when it comes to the investment of taxpayer dollars, to incentivize responsible emergency planning? Should cost shares be the same across the spectrum of preparedness grants or should there be some sort of in-kind allowance? Should rural grant applicants have different match requirements than urban applicants?

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



**Statement of Assistant Sheriff Thomas Roberts  
on behalf of the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department**

**Before the House Transportation Subcommittee on Economic  
Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Management**

**“Building a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Infrastructure for America: The National  
Preparedness System”**

**March 16, 2016  
Washington, DC**

Chairman Barletta, Ranking Member Johnson, distinguished members of the Committee, thank you for inviting me to testify this morning.

In December 2015, I was appointed Assistant Sheriff with the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department (LVMPD) where I currently oversee the Law Enforcement Investigations and Support Group. I have been in law enforcement for over 30 years, first serving as a Law Enforcement Specialist in the United States Air Force then as a Police Officer with LVMPD.

LVMPD is affiliated with two important professional law enforcement associations – the Major County Sheriffs of America (MCSA) and the Major Cities Chiefs Association (MCCA). The MCSA is an association of elected Sheriffs representing our nation’s largest counties with populations of 500,000 people or more, collectively serving over 100 million Americans. The

MCCA is an association comprised of Chiefs and Sheriffs from the 68 largest law enforcement agencies in the United States. The MCSA and MCCA have worked diligently on behalf of their member agencies to identify and address challenges facing local law enforcement and are committed to advancing legislative issues that will enhance the safety of our communities.

Since September 11, 2001, our country has made great progress in our nation's ability to prepare for, respond to and prevent terrorist attacks here in the homeland. The men and women who serve in local law enforcement agencies in the United States are committed to this effort. We work every day, every night, and every holiday, to ensure that our individual communities and our local neighborhood streets are not the next battleground in this ongoing effort.

Local law enforcement is the first group to respond to areas in times of emergency, with the great responsibility to act quickly and effectively in times of terror and uncertainty. This was clearly shown in San Bernardino and Orlando. Securing the homeland cannot be an afterthought – law enforcement regularly and proactively prepares for the unthinkable and as the threat picture and nature of violence has evolved, so too has local law enforcement. With an increased threat environment, law enforcement has continually been tasked to do more with less. Cost implications coupled with a heightened security environment is simply unsustainable. In an era of deep budget cuts and reduced federal funding, state and local law enforcement do not have sufficient funds by themselves to support the homeland security mission, and because of decisions made by the previous administration, have lost access to necessary lifesaving equipment.

Federal funding such as the Homeland Security Grant Program (HSGP) which includes the Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI) and the State Homeland Security Program (SHSP) work to address gaps in local agency capabilities for responding to terrorist threats. UASI was specifically designed to aid high-threat and high-consequence urban areas in an effort to build and sustain capabilities necessary to prevent, protect against, mitigate, respond to, and recover from acts of terrorism<sup>1</sup>. Homeland security and preparedness are national issues that require a national framework and funding, and a nationwide level of collaboration. With the ever-changing threat environment, the capabilities that have been built in part through UASI and SHSP funds are not self-sustaining and require consistent federal support to maintain a level of vigilance against threats. This requires an active, and invested level of collaboration with our partner agencies to maintain a level of preparedness that our citizens deserve.

SHSP and UASI have had a positive impact at the local level within the state of Nevada, most notably within the Southern Nevada Counter Terrorism Center, the state designated fusion center for the state of Nevada. Every program outlined below is supported in part by investments from both SHSP and UASI funding whether it be technology, equipment, or training. LVMPD does not source any HSGP funding for full time employee positions or overtime reimbursement. The staff assigned to the Southern Nevada Counter Terrorism Center (SNCTC), our fusion center, are provided by each of our partner agencies at their own expense.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.homelandsecuritygrants.info/GrantDetails.aspx?gid=33162>



**SNCTC Mission** – The mission of the Southern Nevada Counter Terrorism Center (SNCTC) is to combat crime and terrorism in Nevada by ensuring communication and coordination among international, federal, state, local, tribal, and private sector agencies. The SNCTC links all homeland security stakeholders in Southern Nevada through information sharing and analysis. As part of the National Network of Fusion Centers, our mission is accomplished by collecting and analyzing all relevant information from the disparate data sets accessed and managed by all of our partnering agencies.

The following are highlights of several of our programs that are supported with this funding that reside within the SNCTC:

**Nationwide SAR Initiative** – The SNCTC participates within the Nationwide Suspicious Activity Reporting (SAR) Initiative which is the cornerstone of the National Network of Fusion Centers. It is through this program that our fusion center provides direct benefit to all of our partners. The SNCTC partners with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, state, local, tribal, and territorial law enforcement partners to share this necessary and vital information that is received. This initiative provides local and federal law enforcement with the ability to prevent terrorism and other related criminal activity while strictly abiding by privacy, civil liberties, and civil rights protections.

**Fusion Watch** - The SNCTC maintains a true 24/7 Watch Station that receives suspicious activity reporting at all times. This program, Fusion Watch, is responsible for monitoring significant events, identifying public safety issues, and providing an uninterrupted line of communication for all SNCTC partner agencies. Operating 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and all year around, the Watch Station ultimately supports the SNCTC's mission of providing early warning of all-crimes, hazards, and threats. The Watch Station also assists in the support of critical incidents, emergency response, and investigations. Serving as a focal point for real-time analysis, Watch Station personnel complete time-sensitive requests for information and coordinate the dissemination of information for decision makers. Just as with every aspect of the SNCTC, the protection of privacy and the civil rights and civil liberties is of paramount importance. The SNCTC does not engage in the collection or storage of information or intelligence unless there is reasonable suspicion to believe that a person or a group is engaging in or is about to engage in terrorist activity.

**Real Time Crime Center (RTCC)** – The RTCC is another critical operational component within SNCTC. The RTCC uses live camera feeds to monitor significant events, detect criminal and terrorist activities, and help direct public safety resources. The RTCC also assists in the support of critical incidents, emergency response, and investigations anywhere in the valley. This unique mission further supports SNCTC's goal of preventing, reducing, and disrupting crime and terrorism.

**Counter Terrorism Analytic Group (CTAG)** - The CTAG is one of two primary elements of the SNCTC analysis branch. The CTAG's primary purpose is the collation, evaluation, analysis of information derived from the SNCTC partner agencies that has a nexus to terrorism, criminal enterprises, or national intelligence priorities. In addition to supporting operational efforts at the SNCTC, the CTAG is responsible for the production and dissemination of intelligence products

focusing on partner agency priorities and emergent requirements identified by SNCTC leadership. Every member of the CTAG serves as an agency liaison to the SNCTC for purposes of researching and evaluating SARs. Each agency represented in CTAG conducts research and documents findings associated with every SAR that enable CTS investigators and CTAG analysts to determine the final disposition of each SAR.

**Counter Terrorism Section (CTS)** – CTS is comprised of law enforcement detectives throughout the Las Vegas valley, and is responsible for several mission areas, each of which supports the overall goal of preventing terrorism and mass casualty attacks. They are the true actionable arm of the fusion center, and investigate every suspicious activity report that comes in. They are a 24/7 operation that responds day or night to ensure that nothing is missed, and that our community remains ever vigilant in the fight against terrorism.

**Fusion Liaison Officers (FLO)** - The FLO Coordination Team is a multi-jurisdictional, multi-disciplinary team designed to manage the fusion center outreach program; facilitate information sharing with the fusion center network across the nation, and grow the more than 7,500-member FLO network. This is accomplished through their ability to provide training and direction regarding the network's outreach and engagement activities, and establish professional relationships with community leaders. The FLO program revolves around the principles of building communities of trust and increasing terrorism awareness within our community. The FLO Coordination Team responsibilities include:

- conducting community outreach with a variety of faith-based and community oriented populations, critical infrastructure, and the business community;
- providing terrorism prevention education and training;
- promoting the 'See Something, Say Something' campaign, Nevada's 7 Signs of Terrorism, Operation Vigilance, and other related initiatives;
- as well as serving as a liaison to the community for counter terrorism awareness.

**Silver Shield** - Silver Shield is the state of Nevada's Critical Infrastructure Protection Program which implements the National Infrastructure Protection Plan (NIPP) and incorporates its risk management framework into the program's overall objectives. Having initially formed with the mandate to conduct physical security assessments of critical infrastructure/key resource (CI/KR) sites, the program has evolved to identify, prioritize, and assess risk regarding infrastructure, assets, systems, networks and functions critical to the state's economic security as well as public health and safety. Silver Shield south is administered out of the Southern Nevada Counter Terrorism Center, and is managed by the LVMPD Emergency Management team. The current Silver Shield objectives include:

- Identifying, capturing and cataloging CI/KR within Nevada.
- Assisting public and private sectors in formulating and updating emergency response plans.
- Ensuring that emergency response information is available to first responders.
- Integrating a CI/KR protection process into major event planning.

The UASI program, while critical and effective, needs improvement to keep pace with the current threat environment and to fulfill its original intent to aid high-threat urban areas in an effort to build and sustain capabilities necessary to prevent, protect against, mitigate, respond to,

and recover from acts of terrorism. FEMA needs to decide whether criteria for determining grant funding using the MSA Risk Formula will align with policy and guidance emphasis on the whole community, all-hazards approach, or will remain focused on preparedness and prevention of terrorism.

Too often, high risk areas such as Las Vegas and Orlando, FL are left out of the UASI grant allocation and there needs to be a reevaluation of the MSA Risk Formula to accurately reflect the true count of approved critical infrastructure locations within the MSA by taking into consideration the clustering of CI/KR. With the evolving threat environment and attacks aimed at large gatherings such as Bastille Day in Nice, France and the Christmas market attack in Berlin, special events need to be factored into the calculation on how cities are targeted. No one does special events like Las Vegas, and taking the DHS SEAR listings will only increase the true account for risk in the MSA Risk Profile. FEMA needs to provide clear guidance as to what contributes to the threat category within the MSA process instead of the existing arbitrary process that is not accountable.

There remains a strong need for the Law Enforcement Terrorism Prevention Activities (LETPA) requirement that is in current law. Under this provision, twenty five-percent of all UASI and SHSP funds that are received by a state must be used for LETPA. If this requirement was removed, there would be zero dedicated federal support for terrorism prevention activities, which is a unique role of law enforcement. It would significantly reduce the amount of funding available to support our fusion center and true counter terrorism efforts. On a related note, there should be much more formal local law enforcement input into FEMA's grant guidance and prioritization processes to ensure transparency in the policy directives, grant guidance, and risk formulas.

The Law Enforcement Support Office (LESO) military surplus and federal grant programs are examples of a good partnership between the federal government and local government entities. It is fiscally responsible and assists in equipping our nation's law enforcement with equipment that saves lives. In areas of our nation that are fiscally stressed, it is potentially the only way their law enforcement officers would ever receive that type of support. The transfer of equipment from federal inventory saves taxpayers a significant amount of money because federal surplus items have already been purchased once. In fact, many of these same items have been used by law enforcement agencies for decades.

Through executive action and without any congressional consultation, the Obama Administration recalled certain controlled military surplus equipment that was received by local law enforcement through the "1033 Program." While the ultimate goals of law enforcement remain the same: to protect the public; to solve, deter and respond to criminal acts; and to enforce the law in a responsible and constitutional manner, the previous administration acted to severely restrict law enforcement's ability to do those things based purely on perception at the cost of public safety.

The recall of certain types of controlled equipment will undoubtedly leave America's law enforcement officers less prepared and at a disadvantage to protect local communities against terror attacks and other dangerous situations.


In FY16 under the banner of responding to emergent threats from violent extremism, Congress allocated \$39 million to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) for a grant initiative to specifically help state and local governments prepare for, prevent, and respond to complex, coordinated terrorist attacks with the potential for mass casualties and infrastructure damage. Law enforcement (LE) stakeholders proactively offered suggestions to FEMA that address current LE needs related to prevention and disruption, realistic training and exercises, and training-related equipment. FEMA needs to follow congressional intent and not appropriate the funding for non-law enforcement focused purposes.

In April 2016, the MCSA and MCCA signed a joint letter to Congress expressing serious concerns about a reorganization plan proposed by the National Protection and Programs Directorate (NPPD) at DHS that would have erroneously relegated emergency communications to a minor position within the Department.

Public safety agencies have no greater need during times of emergency than effective, interoperable communications. As noted by the 9/11 Commission, communication failures cost lives like the more than 300 firefighters who perished in the 9/11 attacks. Rather than strengthen emergency communications as recommended by the Commission, the NPPD proposal would have greatly weakened emergency communications by subordinating these efforts beneath Infrastructure Protection Security, a wholly inappropriate placement. At no time before in the history of DHS has the communications program ever been considered an element of infrastructure protection. Emergency communications is a national priority of equal importance to cyber security and infrastructure protection, not a minor function to be placed many levels deep into a division that has a different focus.

Since 9/11 we have sought a national communications infrastructure for emergency communications. For first responders, our most critical component is emergency communications and without effective emergency communications, lives are lost. That's why the MCSA and MCCA are strong supporters of FirstNet, the dedicated public safety broadband network that will help make our communications more resilient and assured. Without this national network, we continue to face challenges with network and coverage failures in times when our communities need us most. FirstNet by itself will not create communication interoperability, but without it, our interoperability needs will continue to be unmet.

I want to thank the Committee and its staff for all of their hard work. LVMPD as well as the MCSA and MCCA seek to be a source of constructive and positive ideas and I thank the Chairman for his commitment to collaboration and willingness to engage local law enforcement.



**LAS VEGAS METROPOLITAN  
POLICE DEPARTMENT**  
JOSEPH LOMBARDO, Sheriff

*Partners with the Community*

May 30, 2017

Representative Lou Barletta (PA-11)  
Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Management  
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington DC, 20515

RE: Building a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Infrastructure for America: the National Preparedness System

Representative Lou Barletta:

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the follow-up questions from the Thursday, March 16, 2017, hearing that was conducted. The Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department (LVMPD) is grateful to be able to provide feedback on these nationally recognized programs and processes.


**Threat Hazard Identification Risk Assessment (THIRA):** *The recipients of the Homeland Security grant process are required to complete an annual THIRA as a tool to help identify certain gaps in their capabilities that may exist. Most of this effort seems to be concentrated at the state-level, which may leave locals insufficiently engaged in the state THIRA process. As we know, all disasters are local, and it is our first responders that will be the first on the ground for any incident. With this in mind, are local stakeholders being included as equal partners in this process? What recommendations do you have to improve the THIRA program and to ensure that locals are more engaged and local capability gaps are more correctly accounted for?*

This effort is very heavily concentrated at the state level and is completed in tandem with the State Preparedness Report (SPR). However, our state completes two individual THIRAs, one for the urban area and one for the state. Our input as the largest law enforcement agency in the state of Nevada, and the state designated fusion center, is utilized in this process for both documents. In the initial year that this project commenced we were able to provide a great deal of threat input for completion. In the subsequent years our state has moved to a process that includes an annual survey to update information. It is in this survey that we are asked to prioritize threats and their likely methods of attack.

It is imperative that local agencies are engaged, as they are the true first responders, and understand the threats that plague our local communities. A threat in the urban area may not be of concern in other regions within our state, so the local component is key to populating an accurate THIRA.

**National Preparedness Report:** *In your opinion, is the National Preparedness Report an accurate reflection of the state of preparedness across the country? Does it accurately incorporate the "whole community" and the strengths and weaknesses at every level of government? How could the report be improved to more accurately reflect capability gaps?*

As a requirement of the Presidential Policy Directive Eight, the purpose of the National Preparedness Report is to summarize the progress in building, sustaining, and delivering the 32 core capabilities outlined within the National Preparedness Goal. Our state participates in this effort by competing and submitting



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our SPR, data call submissions, and the THIRA assessments. We are of the opinion that these documents are prepared in a vacuum. The individuals that respond and assist with the population of the SPRs are very rarely an expert in more than one field, and are unable to appropriately speak to more than a few target capabilities, let alone the preparedness of the entire state as a whole. The weight of the urban areas is equal to that of the rural populations, and threats faced in each can vary drastically.

Not only is this document prepared with unrealistic information, the decisions and inferences made with the data are also inappropriate. If an item is rated high for preparedness, it doesn't mean that funds can be shifted away from that particular task, or that our work there is complete. If success is recognized in a target capability, those successes need to be maintained. Not all target capabilities come with the same level of urgency. Some are of higher importance than others to prevent, protect, respond, and recover from an act of terrorism, and this should be accurately reflected. With the all-threats all-hazards approach, it muddies the waters when discussing and preventing acts of terrorism when they are held in the same arena as other threats.

*Fusion Centers:* *Based on your experience, how far along is the federal government in implementing the information-sharing process, not only with FBI and DHS but the Joint Terrorism Task Forces and the fusion centers? Is the information-sharing process where it needs to be, or does it need to be reformed?*

The Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF) integration continues to need improvement. The Southern Nevada Counter Terrorism Center is the state designated fusion center for Nevada. LVMPD, as the host agency for this center, maintains full-time staff that work to investigate and respond around the clock as suspicious activities are reported. It is through this team that we staff full-time members on the JTTF which is led by our local Federal Bureau of Investigation field office.

This information sharing environment that has been developed here is recognized as a best practice throughout the country. Case information and leads are shared among the necessary parties, and the information flow has proven to be a success. Constant work, and information sharing takes place with staff assigned and reporting to both locations. This ensures that the appropriate level of information makes it to the necessary agencies to positively impact the community and further increase vigilance.

We need to continue to ensure that the information flows both ways with our federal and local partners. No one knows the intelligence and information better than the local street cop for their respective area of responsibility. They are an invaluable resource to be able to get accurate intelligence to assist in investigations. The responsibility of preventing terrorist attacks is both a local and federal obligation and it is through this task force by which this is achieved.

*Additional Legislative Changes:* *How can Congress utilize legislative changes and oversight to improve the National Preparedness System and to give states and locals the necessary tools to build the capabilities to prepare for, respond to, recover from, and mitigate against emergencies and disasters of all kinds?*

Thank you for the opportunity to bring the following items to light. Improvement upon these points, will only serve to better prepare the homeland:

1. Direct Funding Streams for Fusion Centers
2. Increase the Thresholds for LETPA
3. FEMA Administering the HSGP
4. Administration and Award of UASI funding

5. SEAR Qualified Special Events
6. Restrictions on Equipment Procurement

Consideration and action regarding the following items will directly impact the homeland's ability to provide solutions and further enhance our local terrorism prevention efforts.

#### ***Direct Funding Streams for Fusion Centers***

Since the inception of the fusion center network, the need for counter terrorism intelligence has only increased. Originally created to break down silos of intelligence among partner agencies and to enhance information sharing, the fusion center network has taken on a primary role in intelligence and information sharing at the local, state, and federal levels. The purpose of the intelligence network is to maximize the ability to detect, prevent, investigate, and respond to criminal and terrorist activity. This is implemented by our fusion center through the intelligence processes by which information is collected, integrated, evaluated, analyzed, and disseminated. Currently there are no direct funding streams to maintain this critical network that was established more than a decade ago.

It is imperative that the DHS take a serious approach at creating a designated fusion center network funding stream. It is understood that the Homeland Security Grant Program (HSGP) was established and can support fusion centers, however, it does not specifically carve out designated amounts for fusion centers. Thus, the host agencies are left to implore their state agencies to fund fusion centers while maintaining other projects the state deems necessary. Oftentimes, to maintain funding we are left to compete with projects that are exceptional in their own right, yet don't have the same response in the community. While all maintain the right to compete for decreasing funds, this leaves a great level of uncertainty to be able to maintain the vital programs that were established more than a decade ago within the fusion center network. It would only improve our ability as a nation to prevent, detect, deter, respond, and recover from an act of terrorism if our federal partners at DHS would create a funding stream directly for the sustinment of this vital information sharing network.

#### ***Increase Threshold for LETPA Activities***

There remains a strong need for the Law Enforcement Terrorism Prevention Activities (LETPA) requirement that is in current law. Under this provision, twenty-five-percent of all Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) and State Homeland Security Program (SHSP) funds that are received by a state must be used for LETPA. There have been great efforts put forth by some to remove this threshold, which would detrimentally impact the homeland. It is through this specific carve out that our fusion center, and our Chemical Biological Radiological Nuclear Explosive (CBRNE) teams receive vital funding. If this requirement were removed, there would be zero dedicated federal support for terrorism prevention activities, which is a unique role for law enforcement. It would significantly reduce the amount of funding available to support our fusion center and true counter terrorism efforts. On a related note, there should be much more formal local law enforcement input into Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA)'s grant guidance and prioritization processes to ensure transparency in the policy directives.

#### ***FEMA Administering HSGP***

FEMA is tasked with the responsibility of administering the HSGP which includes both the UASI and SHSP funding streams. FEMA's focus is an all-threats all-hazards response and therefore frequently blurs the line when producing the notice of funding opportunities for the HSPG.

Counter terrorism efforts should be of the highest and upmost priority for the homeland security funds. When these grants are administered by FEMA there are several other groups that are able to apply for these funds, and thereby distract from the primary purpose of the HSGP which is counter terrorism efforts. This funding stream should be directly administered by the DHS and should not involve FEMA as the very goals of each agency, while similar, differ in scope. The authorized equipment listing is determined by FEMA, and the approved trainings that the funds can be utilized for are emergency management in focus, and rarely touch on counter terrorism efforts. To house this grant appropriately back with DHS will alleviate the blending and shifting of scope for these counter terrorism funds.

#### ***Administration and Award of UASI Funds***

The Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) Risk Profile has been utilized for the last ten years to determine UASI funding levels for urban areas. While this formula and its weightings have changed over the years, they have not moved to accurately reflect the true risk born by communities. For example, the figures included within the Las Vegas risk profile for the National Infrastructure Index grossly understates the level of critical infrastructure that our valley holds. If several of these critical assets were located elsewhere throughout the country, they would qualify individually on their own merit. However, because they are all located within such close proximity on the Las Vegas Boulevard, they are grouped together and count as one single asset, thereby underrepresenting the critical infrastructure count.

These asset values are also directly used for the Vulnerability Index that makes up 20-percent of the risk formula. We understand that a subset of the DHS/Infrastructure Protection asset counts are used to determine sectors in which "terrorists are more likely to attack." Unfortunately, when these assets are not accurately accounted for in one area there is a cascading affect throughout the equation.

#### ***SEAR Qualified Special Events***

As historically observed and as recent as the Manchester concert, German Christmas Market, San Bernardino and Paris attacks, lone-wolf actors, homegrown violent extremists, and terrorist organizations specifically seek out and target special events in addition to physical critical infrastructure assets. Currently the MSA Risk Profile does not account for the number of special events within the existing equation, and we believe this to be a grave error.

The Las Vegas urban area recently had several hundred Special Event Assessment Rating (SEAR) cataloged activities accepted for ranking. The sheer number of special events that are hosted and the square footage of convention space is unique to Las Vegas in which few other urban areas can compare. Attacks at these types of populations of mass gathering resonate far beyond the local urban area, impacting the US and global economy in ways we have yet to fully determine. To not account for this information within the MSA Risk formula greatly misrepresents the true level of risk at the local level.

#### ***Restrictions on Equipment Procurement***

The Law Enforcement Support Office (LESO) military surplus and federal grant programs are examples of a good partnership between the federal government and local government entities. It is fiscally responsible and assists in supplying our nation's law enforcement with equipment that saves lives. In urban areas that are fiscally stressed, it is potentially the only way their law enforcement officers would ever receive that type of support. The transfer of equipment from



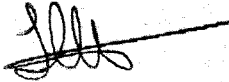
federal inventory saves taxpayers a significant amount of money because federal surplus items have already been purchased once. In fact, many of these same items have been used by law enforcement agencies for decades.

Through executive action and without any congressional consultation, the Obama Administration recalled certain controlled military surplus equipment that was received by local law enforcement through the "1033 Program." While the ultimate goals of law enforcement remain the same: to protect the public; to solve, deter and respond to criminal acts; and to enforce the law in a responsible and constitutional manner, the previous administration acted to severely restrict law enforcement's ability to do those things based purely on perception at the cost of public safety.

The recall of certain types of controlled equipment will undoubtedly leave America's law enforcement officers less prepared and at a disadvantage to protect local communities against terror attacks and other dangerous situations.

In closing, we would like to thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback, and look forward to improved changes.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. Roberts', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Thomas Roberts, Assistant Sheriff  
Law Enforcement Investigations & Support Group



The Jewish Federations®  
OF NORTH AMERICA  
Washington Office

THE **STRENGTH** OF A PEOPLE.  
THE **POWER** OF COMMUNITY

*Testimony of*  
**WILLIAM DAROFF**  
**Senior Vice President for Public Policy and Director of the Washington Office**  
**The Jewish Federations of North America**  
*Before the*  
Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Management  
Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure  
U.S House of Representatives  
Thursday, March 16, 2017

Good morning, Chairman Barletta, Ranking Member Johnson, and members of the committee. Thank you for inviting me to participate in today's hearing. It is an honor for me to be here.

My name is William Daroff. I am the Senior Vice President for Public Policy and Director of the Washington Office of The Jewish Federations of North America (JFNA). JFNA represents 148 Jewish Federations and 300 Network communities. Collectively, we are among the top 10 charities on the continent. Our mission is to protect and enhance the well-being of Jews at home and abroad through social welfare, social services and education. Jewish Federations touch more Jewish lives than any other organization on the planet.

Historically, the Federation movement is a lifeline for Jewish communities in distress in North America and abroad. Over the last dozen years, this lifeline has expanded to include manmade hazards. Since September 11th, nonprofits, in general, and Jewish communal institutions, in particular, have been targeted by international terrorist organizations and home grown violent extremists from across the ideological spectrum. As a consequence, Jewish communal security, and that of the nonprofit sector more generally, has relevance to the National Preparedness System.

For our community, the genesis of FEMA's Nonprofit Security Grant Program came into being in reaction to nationwide FBI warnings in June 2002 that terrorists using fuel trucks might attempt to attack Jewish Schools or synagogues. Since this existential threat came into focus, we have experienced deadly attacks at the Jewish Federation of Greater Seattle in 2006, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, DC in 2009, and the Jewish Community Center of Greater Kansas City in 2014.

In August 2016, the National Counterterrorism Center reported that homegrown violent extremists are increasingly favoring softer civilian targets, such as Jewish houses of worship, and will probably continue to focus on these soft targets (over law-enforcement personnel, military

members, and US Government-associated targets), because they are perceived to have lower levels of security, and because they are being encouraged directly by overseas violent extremists, such as ISIL.

In February, the Southern Poverty Law Center reported that the number of hate groups in the United States rose in 2016, from 892 to 917, and that at least 550 of the groups are anti-Semitic. This uptick is particularly troubling, given that the FBI's hate crimes reporting already finds that the number of anti-Jewish bias incidents surpass all other categories of anti-religious hate crimes combined, annually, despite the Jewish community representing just 2% of the US population.

Unfortunately, the threats have escalated to unprecedented levels in recent months. Since January 1<sup>st</sup>, at least 116 Jewish communal institutions, including community centers, schools, places of worship, and others have received more than 160 bomb threats in 39 states. A growing number of Jewish cemeteries have been desecrated, and dozens upon dozens of incidents of anti-Semitic assaults, vandalism, and graffiti have been reported. Additional occurrences are being reported daily.

This brief threat overview provides a backdrop to our discussion of FEMA's Nonprofit Security Grant Program (NSGP). JFNA proposed the creation of a national security program at the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) in 2004, to bolster the physical security of at-risk nonprofit institutions deemed by DHS to be at-risk of attack from terrorist organizations and violent homegrown extremists. In response, Congress, with bi-partisan support, created the Nonprofit Security Grant Program in fiscal year 2005.

Administered by the Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the NSGP program was designed to support the acquisition and installation of physical target hardening measures to protect against the threats identified as of most concern to at-risk nonprofit institutions. These include protection against explosive device, arson, active shooter, assassination/kidnapping, chemical/biological agents and cyber-attacks.

Prior to the establishment of the NSGP program, there was no committed, coordinated, uniform, centralized program that promoted and ensured that at-risk nonprofit institutions participated in and benefited from meaningful Federal, state and local homeland security efforts. The NSGP program changed this. As described in the Department of Homeland Security's grant guidance for FY 2016:

The intent of the FY 2016 NSGP is to competitively award grant funding to assist non-profit organizations in obtaining the resources required to support the National Preparedness Goal's associated Mission Areas and Core Capabilities. This funding is provided specifically to high-risk nonprofit organizations and the program seeks to integrate nonprofit preparedness activities with broader state and local preparedness efforts. It is also designed to promote coordination and

collaboration in emergency preparedness activities among public and private community representatives, as well as state and local agencies.

More specifically, with grant awards of up to \$75,000, the NSGP program supports the physical target hardening measures necessary to protect nonprofit facilities against threats and to mitigate the effects of an attack, including the installation of access controls, barriers, blast-proofing, monitoring and surveillance capability, and cyber security enhancements. These are similar in nature to the physical security enhancements acquired and installed at Federal government buildings in the post-9/11 environment, such as those protecting the Capitol, House and Senate office buildings, and the Capitol Visitor Center, today.

The program is competitive and risk-based. It involves, first, a state and local review and prioritization, followed by a Federal review of the state submissions and final determinations made by DHS. The program applies the same geographic limitations as FEMA's Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI), which, as of FY 2016, included 29 urban areas located in 20 specified states and the District of Columbia (which also included parts of Northern Virginia). These limitations, imposed on DHS by Congress, are intended to restrict funding to urban areas representing up to 85 percent of the cumulative national terrorism risk, based on intelligence data compiled by the DHS Office of Intelligence and Analysis.

Since its inception, the program has maintained bi-partisan support in both the House and Senate, and is thought of as an efficient and effective means to accomplish a great deal of security enhancement and preparedness through modest resources.

The Nonprofit Security Grant Program has become an essential component of the preparedness grant programs at FEMA. With a continuing and growing record of threats, attempted attacks, and deadly occurrences targeting Jewish communal institutions, as well to other vulnerable populations within the nonprofit sector, we believe there is ample justification for Congress to maintain the Nonprofit Security Grant Program as a singular, stand-alone initiative as a matter of national security, and should consider ways to strengthen the program, not dismantle it.

Conversely, we strongly believe that any effort to replace the NSGP program as part of a consolidation of the larger preparedness grant programs would disenfranchise at-risk nonprofit stakeholders, who could not be expected to meaningfully participate in or effectively compete with larger, more formidable and connected stakeholders for resources in an integrated competitive process. Such a move would dilute the connectivity and continuity between the local stakeholders and the State Administrative Agencies, as well between national stakeholders, such as JFNA, and FEMA.

Rather, in addition to maintaining the integrity of the NSGP program in its current form, we know that the threats to our communal institutions have expanded geographically to smaller and more diffuse communities outside of the UASI areas. As such we believe there is need for Congress to take immediate action to further strengthen the integration of nonprofit preparedness

within state and local preparedness activities, and would urge the Subcommittee to explore further opportunities to build nonprofit security capabilities through the National Preparedness System.

At a time of heightened security concerns within the Jewish community, and for the nonprofit sector more generally, I thank you for this opportunity to testify today on the importance of the Nonprofit Security Grant Program as a stand-alone initiative, and the imperative to further integrate nonprofit preparedness within state and local preparedness activities. The Jewish Federations of North America looks forward to working with you to ensure a strong National Preparedness System for the 21st century, and I look forward to answering any questions you may have.

**“Building a 21st Century Infrastructure for America: The National Preparedness System”  
Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Management  
Thursday, March 16, 2017, 10:00 a.m.  
2167 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C.**

**Questions for the Record to William Daroff**

*Submitted on behalf of Representative Lou Barletta (PA-11)*

**Threat and Hazard Identification Risk Assessment**

1. The recipients of the Homeland Security grant programs are required to complete an annual Threat and Hazard Identification Risk Assessment (THIRA) as a tool to help identify certain gaps in their capabilities that may exist. Most of this effort seems to be concentrated at the state-level, which may leave locals insufficiently engaged in the state THIRA process. As we know, all disasters are local, and it is our first responders that will be the first on the ground for any incident. With this in mind, are local stakeholders being included as equal partners in this process? What recommendations do you have to improve the THIRA program and to ensure that locals are more engaged and local capability gaps are more correctly accounted for?

**ANSWER:** The State Administrative Agency is the applicant for the purposes of the NSGP program. To the degree that the SAA completes an annual THIRA assessment, The Jewish Federations has not been engaged in the state THIRA process. We are also not aware of any subgrantees of the program being asked to engage in this process. We do believe that there is room for greater stakeholder engagement at the local level of the NSGP subgrantees, perhaps through a local representative or coordinating body to ensure that local capability gaps in our sector are better accounted for and addressed. The Jewish Federations is a coordinating body of 148 Jewish Federations and 300 Network Communities throughout the country, and we could possibly play some coordinating or facilitating role in improved engagement.

**National Preparedness Report**

1. In your opinion, is the National Preparedness Report an accurate reflection of the state of preparedness across the country? Does it accurately incorporate the “whole community” and the strengths and weaknesses at every level of government? How could the report be improved to more accurately reflect capability gaps?

**ANSWER:** We strongly endorse the “whole community” approach to preparedness, and equally believe strongly that the NSGP program contributes to meeting the national preparedness goal. With respect to the National Preparedness Report, the most recent edition published in March 2016, summarized the engagement of nonprofit and faith-based organizations in 2015. Most notable were the trainings and presentations to educate more than 5,000 faith leaders and government personnel on the development of high-quality operations plans for Houses of Worship. Also of note were a number of state initiatives that cultivated the nonprofit sector in

recovery from and resiliency to natural disasters and the engagement of interfaith organizations in countering violent extremism. As an organization that participates in FEMA's NVOAD (National Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster), and serves as a coordinating body for Jewish communal response to disasters, we believe the National Preparedness Report could benefit from more input from nonprofit and faith-based stakeholders, greater focus on the contribution and best practices of our sector to meeting the national preparedness goal, and greater encouragement for the participation of nonprofit and faith-based stakeholders in decisions about program priorities, resource allocations, and community actions (including with respect to the particular risks to this sector from terrorist organizations and violent homegrown extremists).

#### **Cost Share**

1. The numerous federal disaster preparedness grant programs available to states and localities have different costs shares, ranging from 50 percent with the Emergency Management Performance Grant to zero with the Urban Area Security Initiative Grant. Should grant recipients have some "skin in the game" when it comes to the investment of taxpayer dollars, to incentivize responsible emergency planning? Should cost shares be the same across the spectrum of preparedness grants or should there be some sort of in-kind allowance? Should rural grant applicants have different match requirements than urban applicants?

**ANSWER:** There was a brief 25 percent cost-share requirement at the commencement of the NSGP program when the program grant amount was capped at \$100,000. The Department of Homeland Security discontinued this requirement after it was determined that it created a significant barrier for many subgrantees who could not satisfy the obligation. Instead, the cap was reduced to \$75,000, which allowed a greater number of applicants to participate in the program annually. Faith-based and nonprofit organizations cannot simply pass along the added cost to their clients. They would have to raise the cost-share through charitable contributions or otherwise redirect contributions away from the supports and services they provide to their constituents. Many are already paying for on-going security costs not covered by the NSGP program, such as for security personnel. Under the circumstances, we do not believe that the NSGP subgrantees should "have skin in the game." Rather, we believe that at-risk nonprofit institutions should receive the critical physical security enhancements provided through the grant to protect against potential grievous harm to their infrastructure, constituents, employees, and volunteers without financial obstacles.

#### **Passthrough/Grants Directly to Locals**

1. Some grant funds can be distributed directly to local applicants, while others ultimately intended for locals must first pass through the state or local governments, to be distributed as subgrants. Does this process cause any challenges? If so, are there potential solutions?

**ANSWER:** We believe that the current pass-through approach to the NSGP program is important to the quality, coordination and oversight of the program, and we would oppose a transition to a system that provides direct distribution of funds to subgrant recipients. The program as currently devised promotes the engagement of the subgrantees with State and local

officials. We would be concerned that this engagement would be significantly diminished through a pass-through approach, and would ultimately hinder the grant oversight, administration and decision making processes, the relationship between the SAAs and the subgrantees, and the quality and impacts of the awards. The state and local governments are relied upon as subject matter experts and should remain fully engaged in the transactional aspects of the awards process.



*Testimony of*  
**MICHAEL FEINSTEIN**  
**President and Chief Executive Officer**  
**The Bender JCC of Greater Washington**  
*Before the*  
**Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings, and**  
**Emergency Management**  
**Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure**  
**U.S House of Representatives**  
*Thursday, March 16, 2017*

Thank you Mr. Chairman and members of the Subcommittee for the opportunity to testify today, regarding FEMA's Nonprofit Security Grant Program.

My name is Michael Feinstein and I am the President and Chief Executive Officer of the Bender JCC, located in Rockville, Maryland. We are a 501(c)(3), non-sectarian, community benefit agency, founded in 1913 and housed at our current location since 1969.

The Bender JCC is guided by our Jewish values to build a warm, inclusive, diverse and thriving community that welcomes everyone to participate in our programs - people of all backgrounds, faiths, ethnicities, abilities and sexual orientations. We serve a cross-section of the area's population from young mothers with infants to seniors who are 100 years old, or as we like to say, we serve everyone from babies to bobbies. Tens of thousands of people, representing over a half million visits through our doors each year, participate in cultural, educational, recreational, social and safety-net programs and services. We are open seven days a week, 365 days a year.

Our facilities are used in a variety of ways by individuals affiliated with the Bender JCC, other Jewish agencies, secular nonprofit organizations and government agencies. Several times a year we host large community gatherings attended by thousands people. Daily there are over 400 children in our preschool, afterschool and enrichment programs and in the summer over 500 children and 250 counselors participate in our inclusive day camp, with about 100 of those children having some type of disability. We provide arts and culture programs, lectures, fitness and aquatics classes and Jewish festivals and holiday celebrations to the broad community. We

help seniors age in place through a hot lunch and social program and a community-based Parkinson's Wellness Initiative, in partnership with Georgetown University Medical Center. And, we serve as a resource to the entire community, by providing meeting rooms and theatre space to hundreds of nonprofits in need of free or inexpensive program and performance space, and by serving as a public polling place for elections.

As a symbolic institution in the national capital region representing the highly-recognized "JCC" brand and serving the broad community, the Bender JCC faces a range of security threats. Past threats to our facility have included domestic disputes and protective orders, death and bomb threats against specific employees on campus, and a kidnapping threat against a JCC member.

We are directly affected by any and all incitement of violence against Jews and anti-Semitic rhetoric and actions locally, nationally, and abroad. In addition, acts of violence in our public schools have repercussions for how we view security at our facility.

Our 120,000 square foot building and outdoor recreational facilities sit on a 26 acre Jewish community campus in an increasingly urbanized area of Montgomery County, with easy access from public transportation and street traffic.

Immediately after 9/11, a comprehensive threat and security analysis identified a number of security vulnerabilities, deemed the JCC to be a high visibility profile target, and assessed the threat to our facility to be high. This assessment became reality several years ago when law enforcement alerted us to a credible threat against our institution after picking up chatter that targeted JCCs in our region. Following the shooting at the Kansas City JCC almost three years ago we undertook another security review which identified additional operational security vulnerabilities.

Today we face a new threat of terrorism against our institution as a result of the recent spate of bomb threats against JCCs and other Jewish institutions across the country. So far, we have been targeted twice – a phoned in bomb threat on January 9<sup>th</sup> that forced us to evacuate our building and an emailed bomb threat on March 6<sup>th</sup> that resulted in multiple sweeps of our building by staff

and police. As a result we are again evaluating what capital investments may be required to enhance our security against emerging threats.

FEMA's Nonprofit Security Grant Program has provided critical security resources to the Bender JCC. Based on the recommendations of multiple security analyses, we have used NSGP funding for critical capital investments to create layers of security through deterrence and hardening of our facility. NSGP-funded security enhancements have included fences, gates at our driveway entrance and exit, bollards, security cameras, bomb-proof trash cans, and a fully-integrated emergency communication system.

We believe that these and other security enhancements have provided a significant measure of protection for our members, guests and staff against lone wolves who scout vulnerable locations to attack. They offer protection against possible abduction or harm of children and the protection of JCC staff, members and the public and facilitate a quick response to threats.

The NSGP program is extremely important to the Bender JCC, particularly due to the heightened security threat to our Center. Because of this program, we have been able to upgrade our security primarily through target-hardening investments that we believe have strengthened our ability to proactively protect our community. We could not have afforded all of these security enhancements on our own and we have used the grant program to leverage other grant and private funding. As a result of recent threats, we believe it will be necessary for us to seek further NSGP funding in the next grant cycle.

The Bender JCC has had an extremely positive experience with the National Capital Region State Administrative Agency (DCHSEMA). They announce and roll out the program in a timely fashion, provide helpful briefings that explain the proposal items in detail, and are the "go to" people with any questions or clarification needed during the period of performance. They have been great stewards of the program, providing guidance to ensure the application process, oversight and compliance requirements, and project close-out were in order and satisfied.

We would be extremely concerned if the program were to be decentralized, with nonprofits competing with multiple state and local law enforcement, fire-fighters, port and transit security, and other emergency responders for FEMA preparedness grants. We believe that we would find ourselves at a severe competitive disadvantage against these larger entities, and would lose the level of attention and cooperation we currently have with the State Administrative Agency that has made our experience with the NSGP program successful.

Let me close by adding one additional concern for your consideration, pertaining to FEMA's oversight over the program. As with other grants administered by FEMA, the NSGP program recipients are required to secure an environmental and historic preservation certification from FEMA before they are permitted to draw-down grant funds. While we take no issue with respect to the certification requirement, we have experienced significant delays in receiving the clearance and the ability to draw-down funds. Given the nature of the program, and the inherent desire to put in place security enhancements expeditiously, we believe that the program would benefit from FEMA prioritizing the environmental and historic preservation certification process in order to alleviate the backlog in the approval process.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I welcome any questions you may have.

**“Building a 21st Century Infrastructure for America: The National Preparedness System”  
Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Management  
Thursday, March 16, 2017, 10:00 a.m.  
2167 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C.**

**Questions for the Record to Michael Feinstein**

*Submitted on behalf of Representative Lou Barletta (PA-11)*

**Threat and Hazard Identification Risk Assessment**

1. The recipients of the Homeland Security grant programs are required to complete an annual Threat and Hazard Identification Risk Assessment (THIRA) as a tool to help identify certain gaps in their capabilities that may exist. Most of this effort seems to be concentrated at the state-level, which may leave locals insufficiently engaged in the state THIRA process. As we know, all disasters are local, and it is our first responders that will be the first on the ground for any incident. With this in mind, are local stakeholders being included as equal partners in this process? What recommendations do you have to improve the THIRA program and to ensure that locals are more engaged and local capability gaps are more correctly accounted for?

**ANSWER:** We have been a past recipient of the Nonprofit Security Grant Program (NSGP), and as such have not been subject to the THIRA assessment requirements.

**National Preparedness Report**

1. In your opinion, is the National Preparedness Report an accurate reflection of the state of preparedness across the country? Does it accurately incorporate the “whole community” and the strengths and weaknesses at every level of government? How could the report be improved to more accurately reflect capability gaps?

**ANSWER:** While I have not reviewed the National Preparedness Report as a subgrantee of the NSGP program, I can reflect that our participation in the program has brought us in contact with state and local law enforcement and emergency responders in ways and frequency greater and more meaningful than had we not participated in the program. In my opinion, NSGP has been a positive catalyst in strengthening understanding, partnership, and continuity between the nonprofit sector and state and local responders, resulting in greater capabilities and enhanced preparedness in the community.

**Fusion Centers**

1. Based on your experience, how far along is the federal government in implementing the information-sharing process, not only with FBI and DHS but the Joint Terrorism Task Forces and the fusion centers? Is the information-sharing process where it needs to be, or does it need to be reformed?

**ANSWER:** As a subgrantee of the NSGP program, we have not been asked to or otherwise been engaged in direct information sharing with these enumerated Federal agencies or relevant fusion center. However, our campus security director is in regular contact with the fusion center which has shared important information.

**Cost Share**

1. The numerous federal disaster preparedness grant programs available to states and localities have different costs shares, ranging from 50 percent with the Emergency Management Performance Grant to zero with the Urban Area Security Initiative Grant. Should grant recipients have some “skin in the game” when it comes to the investment of taxpayer dollars, to incentivize responsible emergency planning? Should cost shares be the same across the spectrum of preparedness grants or should there be some sort of in-kind allowance? Should rural grant applicants have different match requirements than urban applicants?

**ANSWER:** As I expressed in my oral remarks, NSGP helped us to defray a portion of our significant and recurring security capital costs. In my view, a cost-share for the NSGP program would be burdensome to charitable and nonprofit organizations that are already struggling with increased security operating costs not covered by NSGP. Smaller and faith-based institutions in my view could find a cost-share requirement to be onerous and unmanageable and could lead to a chilling effect, where institutions at-risk and vulnerable forego the program and the security enhancements that would otherwise be available to them through the program.

UNION OF ORTHODOX JEWISH CONGREGATIONS OF AMERICA



MARK (MOISHE) BANE  
President

March 16, 2017

ALLEN FAGIN  
Executive Vice President

JERRY WOLASKY  
Chairman, Advocacy

NATHAN J. DIAMENT  
Executive Director

MAURY LITWACK  
Director of State  
Political Affairs

HOWARD FRIEDMAN  
Chairman, Board of Directors

The Honorable Lou Barletta  
Chairman, Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings and  
Emergency Management  
House committee on Transportation and Infrastructure  
United States Congress  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Barletta:

On behalf of the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America (Orthodox Union)—the nation's largest Orthodox Jewish umbrella organization—we thank you and members of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Management for holding today's hearing on "Building a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Infrastructure for America: The National Preparedness System." The Orthodox Union is particularly interested in the essential role the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) Nonprofit Security Grant Program (NSGP) plays for our community.

In 2005, the effort to create the NSGP was spearheaded by the Orthodox Union (together with the Jewish Federations of North America) and the support of many coalition partners and bipartisan leaders in Congress. Since that time, Congress has appropriated nearly \$200 million for the program, and awarded over 2,000 grants to at-risk nonprofit organizations, including Jewish Community Centers, Synagogues, and Jewish Day Schools. These grants have provided for the acquisition and installation of critical security improvements including fencing, lighting, surveillance, metal detection equipment, blast proofing doors, windows and more at hundreds of synagogues and schools in the United States.

In recent months, Jewish organizations have been the target of over 100 threats in the United States. The NSGP enables Jewish and other at-risk nonprofit organizations to equip themselves with the tools they need to be more secure.

Since its inception, the NSGP has been the foundation for Jewish community (and other nonprofits) making our buildings secure. The NSGP has led the field and prompted some states and localities to take complementary action to keep our communities safe. The continued operation and funding of the NSGP is essential, as it will not only keep our community safer, but will be a statement of solidarity and support in the face of such threats.

We urge you and your colleagues to support the Nonprofit Security Grant Program.

Sincerely,

Nathan J. Diament

*OU Advocacy is the non-partisan public policy and advocacy arm of the Orthodox Union, the nation's largest Orthodox Jewish umbrella organization founded in 1898.*

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