



October 27, 2013

The Honorable Bill Shuster
Chairman
Committee on Transportation
and Infrastructure
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC. 20515

The Honorable Nick J. Rahall II
Ranking Member
Committee on Transportation
and Infrastructure
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Lou Barletta
Chairman
Subcommittee on Public Buildings, Economic
Development, and Emergency Management
Committee on Transportation
and Infrastructure
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable André Carson
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Public Buildings, Economic
Development and Emergency Management
Committee on Transportation
and Infrastructure
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Shuster, Ranking Member Rahall, Subcommittee Chairman Barletta and Subcommittee Ranking Member Carson:

On behalf of the National Association of Counties and the US Council of the International Association of Emergency Managers, we am writing to thank the Committee for its continuing efforts to strengthen emergency management and to offer our support for HR 3300, the FEMA Reauthorization Act of 2013, as introduced. We would particularly like to thank the committee for engaging our county officials and our local emergency managers in discussions of the legislation and the continued efforts of the Committee to streamline disaster recovery and to implement the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act to strengthen FEMA.

We would like to comment particularly on a number of provisions of HR 3300.

Section 102: We support the modernization of the Integrated Public Alert and Warning System which will assure the President has the ability to address the nation in a time of crisis. It will also provide a mechanism for local and state emergency management programs to provide vital alert and warning information to as much of the "whole community" as possible. In addition, we are appreciative that the Committee has extended consideration for a local government emergency manager to be among those considered for membership on the temporary advisory committee.

Section 201: We support the reauthorization of the Urban Search and Rescue Response System. These teams consist primarily of local resources ready to respond to an incident with national implications. We also appreciate the much needed clarification regarding compensation and liability protection.

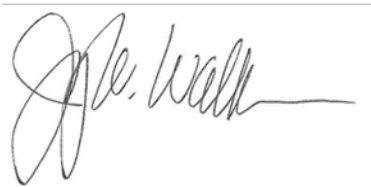
Section 202: We support the reauthorization of Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) funding. This funding allows local and state personnel in one state to provide assistance to local and state personnel in another state. As local county elected officials and emergency managers, we both give and receive assistance through this mechanism.

Thank you again for your outreach to counties and local emergency managers. We appreciate the opportunity to work with you and your staff as you continue to seek a strong FEMA and resilient communities across our great nation. Any time that we may be of assistance, please feel free to have a member of your staff contact Arlandis Rush, Associate Legislative Director, Justice and Public Safety and Large Urban County Caucus at (202)740-1115 or Martha Braddock, IAEM-USA Policy Advisor at (703)644-7082.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Linda Langston".

Linda Langston, President
National Association of Counties

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jeff Walker".

Jeff Walker, CEM, President
International Association of Emergency Managers U.S. Council

As the national organization representing America's 3061 counties, we are deeply committed to protecting communities and ensuring that our nation is prepared for future all hazard threats and disasters. Counties are the first responders to terrorist attacks, natural disasters and other major emergencies. Whether it is a fire, a flood, a horrific crash, or an act of terrorism; counties across the nation respond to virtually any emergency situation. County public safety, public health, emergency managers, sheriffs and other appointed workers are at the frontlines in the fight to protect the people of America and safeguard our communities. We are responsible for putting out fires, enforcing the law, caring for the injured, and informing the public.

IAEM-USA is our nation's largest association of emergency management professionals, with over 5,000 members including emergency managers at the state and local government levels, tribal nations, the military, colleges and universities, private business and the nonprofit sector. Most of our members are city and county emergency managers who perform the crucial function of coordinating and integrating the efforts at the local level to prepare for, mitigate the effects of, respond to, and recover from all types of disasters including terrorist attacks. Our membership includes emergency managers from large urban areas as well as rural areas.