



April 21, 2017

Dear Members of Congress,

As you work towards finalizing appropriations for FY 2018 and the remainder of FY 2017, the undersigned organizations – which represent emergency managers, first responders, elected officials and other experts and professionals who work daily to protect the nation from natural and man-made threats at the state and local levels – urge you to maintain funding for grant programs administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). FEMA’s grant programs strengthen the capabilities of state and local governments to address the threats and hazards we face perennially, and cuts to these programs would erode those capabilities, ultimately making our nation less safe and requiring more federal assistance when disasters strike.

FEMA’s grant programs are the product of years of work by Congress, federal agencies, state and local governments and their emergency management agencies. This strong intergovernmental partnership has fostered a menu of grants that have improved the nation’s resiliency to disaster in a systemic, documented and measurable manner. Importantly, FEMA’s preparedness grants not only help local and state governments and emergency management agencies protect their own communities, they also create a national emergency management structure that helps coordinate preparedness efforts across state and local lines. By fostering this structure, FEMA grants enable state and local agencies to support and assist each other when disasters strain their individual capabilities, helping to save lives and lessen the overall physical and fiscal impact of disasters.

As you work over the coming weeks and months to appropriate funding for FY 2018 and the remainder of the current fiscal year, we respectfully urge you to closely assess the potential local and state impacts of proposed cuts and new matching requirements for FEMA grant programs. We also urge you to preserve funding for flood risk maps, which benefit not only flood insurance policy holders, but also state and local officials who use these maps to guide development away from at-risk areas and implement hazard mitigation measures that decrease the fiscal and structural impact of floods.

Although we appreciate the difficulty of funding a broad array of federal programs while pursuing budgetary savings, we believe that achieving these savings through cuts to FEMA programs and flood risk maps would prove shortsighted from a budgetary standpoint and counterproductive to our collective mission of protecting the nation from threats and disasters.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this important matter, and we look forward to working with you as the appropriations process moves forward.



Sincerely,

National Association of Counties (NACo)
National Emergency Management Association (NEMA)
International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM)
Big City Emergency Managers (BCEM)
National League of Cities (NLC)
U.S. Conference of Mayors (USCM)
National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL)
Association of State Floodplain Managers (ASFPM)
International Association of Fire Chiefs (IACF)
The International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF)
American Public Works Association (APWA)
Disaster Recovery Contractors Association (DRCA)
National Association of Development Organizations (NADO)
National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA)
National Association of County Engineers (NACE)
National Association of REALTORS® (NAR)
Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS)