



Supporting Those Who Serve



March 8, 2013

The Honorable Michael McCaul, Chairman
The Honorable Bennie G. Thompson
Ranking Member
Committee on Homeland Security
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Susan W. Brooks, Chairman
The Honorable Donald M. Payne, Jr.,
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness,
Response and Communications
Committee on Homeland Security
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. McCaul, Mr. Thompson, Ms. Brooks, and Mr. Payne:

We write on behalf of local elected officials, emergency managers, major city police chiefs, sheriffs, and the major fire service organizations to express again our concern with the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA's) intent to implement the National Preparedness Grant Program (NPGP) in Fiscal Year (FY) 2013. As you work through the process to complete appropriations for FY 2013, we urge you to include the following points relating to the homeland security grant programs in any appropriations measures:

- Language that would prohibit FEMA from implementing the NPGP in FY 2013.
- The Senate's approach to providing FY 2013 funding so that each homeland security grant program receives an individual appropriations including the State Homeland Security and Urban Areas Security Initiative grant programs.
- An appropriation as close as possible to the House's total funding level of \$1.53 billion for the homeland security grant programs.

Our organizations first learned of FEMA's plans to move ahead with NPGP during the agency's 2012 National Preparedness Symposium on August 7-9 when staff from the Grants Directorate stated that FEMA will move forward with the NPGP in FY 2013. More recently, organization representatives met on two occasions with FEMA officials responsible for the Grants Program Directorate to express concerns with FEMA's intent to move forward with the NPGP despite opposition from Congress and our organizations to the proposal for this year. We were told that this is an Administration initiative and FEMA intends to move forward with it, believing they have sufficient authority under existing law to implement significant portions of it.

Both the House and Senate committees rejected the NPGP for FY 2013, saying it lacked the detail required for a new program. The committee report to HR. 5855 directed FEMA to work with the authorizing committees to develop a reform proposal that could be considered in future years. The committee report also stated that numerous stakeholders expressed concern with the grant proposal and with the lack of outreach to them before it was announced in the President's FY 2013 budget. The report said that the committee "considers this lack of outreach concerning and it should be addressed."

Our organizations have developed and agreed upon a set of principles for reforming the homeland security grant programs: transparency, local involvement, flexibility and accountability, local funding, terrorism prevention, and incentives for regionalization. We look forward to working with Congress and the Administration to develop changes to the programs that are consistent with these principles and will improve the programs in the years ahead.

If we can provide any further information or assistance, please contact us through the U.S. Conference of Mayor's Public Safety Director, Laura DeKoven Waxman, at (202) 861-6754 or lwaxman@usmayors.org or the International Association of Fire Chiefs Director of Government Relations, Ken LaSala, International Association of Fire Chiefs at (703) 273-9815 x347 or KLaSala@iafc.org.

Sincerely,

National Association of Counties
National League of Cities
The United States Conference of Mayors
U.S. Council of the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM-USA)
International Association of Fire Chiefs
International Association of Fire Fighters
National Volunteer Fire Council
Congressional Fire Services Institute
National Sheriffs' Association
Major County Sheriffs' Association
Major Cities Chiefs Association
National Homeland Security Association