



## Natural Hazard Mitigation Association

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**NHMA Executive Director**  
Alessandra Jerolleman, MPA, CFM

The Honorable John Kerry  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Kerry:

The Natural Hazard Mitigation Association appreciates the opportunity to support the Nation and its collective leadership relative to matters pertaining to reducing the country's unprecedented risks to natural disasters. Our commitments and knowledge base span seismic, flood, wind, and fire driven events and we will remain committed to the educating and informing of all parties until the day arrives for which we see an appropriate balance between population growth, development, and the tensions of natural phenomenon placed on our populations.

We are extremely pleased that you are taking the leadership to introduce this legislation. We are well aware that this Bill was being developed long before our Nation was slammed by Superstorm Sandy. Your introduction of this legislation while so many people, institutions and communities still reel from the Sandy devastation is extremely timely and needed.

Therefore we are pleased to offer our endorsement and provide an initial commentary on the provided draft legislation "extreme weather legislation".

Of primary note, we are generally pleased with the construction of the draft and are especially pleased with the dialogue the legislation must foster as we agree that our climate has entered a period for which naturally occurring phenomena are resulting in greater consequences on our populations and economies. We hope that this legislation will help provide an impetus to conduct a much needed National Conversation about achieving a safer, sustainable future for our Nation through greatly improved safe development practices which emphasize resilience, and hazard mitigation

We believe that the legislation would be improved if it were revised to place the overarching responsibility with the Assistant Administrator of the Federal Insurance and Mitigation Administration (FIMA) from within FEMA, instead of the Office of Science & Technology Policy serving as the "lead" agency for analysis and oversight.

*The Natural Hazard Mitigation Association (NHMA) promotes hazard mitigation and the reduction of risk. This is accomplished through the following goals: creation of a forum for professional to share their ideas and experiences, establishing hazard mitigation as a profession in its own right, functioning as a professional and unified voice for hazard mitigation managers in the public marketplace for ideas and the political arena, achieving greater awareness of the social component of hazard mitigation decisions, developing more effective mitigation programs which benefit the community as a whole and ingrain mitigation as part of societies culture. Membership is open to anyone interested in supporting the goal of reducing disaster losses including mitigation managers, experts, professionals, students, government officials, community activists, academics, and others who are working in the field of hazard mitigation.*

We would care to note that within FIMA resides the Risk Analysis Division wherein there previously exists the appropriate span and capabilities to design, develop, and implement a strategy related to the emergence of extreme weather related events. More specifically the draft references PPD-8 which in its revised form being the addition of the “Mitigation Framework” was led by the Deputy Division Director of the Risk Analysis Division. Equally the draft references the work conducted by the National Academies “Dam and Levee Safety and Community Resilience” which was also a directed document under FIMA’s Risk Analysis Division.

In conclusion, the NHMA has a diverse, national membership comprised of professionals involved in hazard mitigation at the local, state, regional and federal levels. Our membership consists of public officials, engineers, planners, academics, emergency managers, and many other professionals engaged in all aspects of natural hazard risk reduction and resilience building.

Attached please find an itemized list of our more detailed comments. As noted we would be pleased to contribute to this important dialogue in support of your committee and its mission of supporting the greatest opportunity of serving the public good of the American people.

Sincerely,



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