



Alliance of the Ports of Canada, the Caribbean, Latin America and the United States



Supporting Those Who Serve



March 10, 2015

The Honorable Thad Cochran, Chairman
The Honorable Barbara Mikulski, Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable John Hoeven, Chairman
The Honorable Jean Shaheen,
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Homeland Security
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Cochran, Mikulski, Hoeven, and Shaheen:

As you begin development of Fiscal Year (FY) 2016 appropriations legislation, we write on behalf of local elected officials, emergency managers, port operators, transit operators, police chiefs and colonels, sheriffs, and the major fire service organizations to urge you once again not to implement the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA's) National Preparedness Grant Program (NPGP) proposal through the appropriations process.

The NPGP proposal would convert the current suite of homeland security grant programs into state-administered block and competitive grant programs in which funding decisions are based on state and multi-state threat assessments without clear local involvement. We appreciate the fact that for the last three years Congress has rejected the Administration's proposed NPGP and agreed with us that any changes to the grant programs must be considered by the authorizing committees. We are confident that the authorizing committees will give careful consideration to FEMA's specific proposals and any other proposals submitted.

As an alternative to the NPGP, our organizations have developed and agreed on 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 grant programs that are consistent with these principles, and that will improve the programs in the years ahead.

We also want to take this opportunity to thank you for including language in the FY 2015 homeland security appropriations bill that would prohibit FEMA from implementing the NPGP in FY 2014 without explicit congressional authorization. Thank you also for providing specific funding levels for each homeland security grant program, including the State Homeland Security Grant Program, Urban Areas Security Initiative, port security, and transportation security grant programs.

If we can provide further information or assistance, please contact us through the U.S. Conference of Mayors' Public Safety Director, Laura DeKoven Waxman, at (202) 489-7534 or lwaxman@usmayors.org, or the International Association of Fire Chiefs' Director of Government Relations and Policy, Ken LaSala, at (703) 273-9815 x347 or KLaSala@iafc.org.

Sincerely,

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

CC: The Honorable Ron Johnson, Chairman, Senate Homeland Security Committee
The Honorable Thomas R. Carper, Ranking Member, Senate Homeland Security Committee
The Honorable Rand Paul, Chairman, Subcommittee on Federal Spending, Oversight and Emergency Management, Senate Homeland Security Committee
The Honorable Tammy Baldwin, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Federal Spending, Oversight and Emergency Management, Senate Homeland Security Committee