



Supporting Those Who Serve



June 28, 2013

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

The Honorable Mary Landrieu, Chairman
The Honorable Dan Coats, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Homeland Security
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Mikulski, Shelby, Landrieu, and Coats:

We write on behalf of local elected officials, emergency managers, police chiefs and colonels, sheriffs, and the major fire service organizations to again express our concern with the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA's) National Preparedness Grant Program (NPGP) proposal. The 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.

As you develop the Fiscal Year (FY) 2014 homeland security appropriations bill, we urge you to include language, similar to the language in the House-passed H.R. 2217, which would prohibit FEMA from implementing the NPGP in FY 2014 without explicit congressional authorization. We also urge you to provide 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, as Congress did for the current fiscal year.

While we appreciate the fact that FEMA made changes in its FY 2014 budget proposal in response to some of the concerns which our organizations raised, the proposal still contains several items of concern. These items include the collapse of all of the current programs into a consolidated program that would no longer guarantee the retention of key programs; the removal of the 25 percent set-aside for law enforcement terrorism prevention; and the expansion of the

pool of eligible applicants for the portion of the funds which must be passed through to include local governments to include port and transit authorities and private organizations.

We especially appreciate the fact that thus far Congress has rejected the Administration's proposed changes to the homeland security grant programs and agreed with us that those changes must be considered by the authorizing committees. We are confident that the authorizing committees will give careful consideration to FEMA's specific proposals when they receive them.

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 will improve them for the future.

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,

**Congressional Fire Services Institute
International Association of Fire Chiefs
International Association of Fire Fighters
Major Cities Chiefs Association
Major County Sheriffs' Association
International Association of Chiefs of Police
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 Thomas R. Carper, Chairman, Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee
The Honorable Tom Coburn, Ranking Member, Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee
The Honorable Mark Begich, Chairman, Subcommittee on Emergency Management, Intergovernmental Relations, and the District of Columbia
The Honorable Rand Paul, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Emergency Management, Intergovernmental Relations, and the District of Columbia