



2023 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

ENHANCE THE STATE-FEDERAL PARTNERSHIP *Emergency Management Performance Grants*

With the dollar-for-dollar match, EMPG allowed state and local officials to manage 19,290 events last year without federal disaster assistance. This is in addition to federal disaster declarations for COVID and other events. Congress should codify one of the supplemental funding amounts provided during COVID and increase EMPG by \$100 million for a total of \$455 million in FY24.

SUPPORT STATES ASSISTING ONE ANOTHER *Emergency Management Assistance Compact*

States helping each other in responding to a disaster in lieu of federal assets drives down disaster costs. Expanding EMAC from \$2 million to \$3 million annually will allow for modernization, integration, and expansion of EMAC and national mutual aid.

STREAMLINE RECOVERY PROGRAMS

Utilize New or Existing Authorities for a Thoughtful and Collaborative Approach Forward

If we as a nation are to increase transparency, efficiency, and accountability in our disaster recovery system, we must be willing to continue taking bold steps like the Disaster Recovery Reform Act (DRRA) of 2018. This should be done thoughtfully and with a specific end-state in mind.

REAFFIRM A COMMITMENT TO NATIONAL PREPAREDNESS *State Homeland Security Grants, and Education & Training Programs*

Inconsistent funding to preparedness programs and last-minute changes to guidance undermines the ability of state and local officials to continually answer the Federal and national call to reduce risk, more readily respond to events, and build the leadership of tomorrow.

**ENHANCE THE STATE-FEDERAL PARTNERSHIP*****Emergency Management Performance Grants***

With a 50-50 matching requirement, the true investment in this program is more than twice the Federal expenditure (\$355 million in FY23). While the emergency management community remains thankful for recent increases, we must continue working to close the funding gap on this program. In FY22, 52 disasters, not including those ongoing for COVID-19, required a major or emergency declaration through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Beyond that, 19,290 events required state or local assets, but did not reach the level of a federal declaration. Programs such as EMPG allow these events to be managed without Federal expenditures.

The impact of EMPG extends far beyond traditional emergency management activities. For example, while health officials maintain primary responsibility for the COVID-19 response at the Federal level, state and local emergency managers conduct pivotal functions to protect the American people. Emergency managers conduct coordinating activities across state and local agencies; augment ongoing disaster preparations, responses, and recoveries for other events; activate Emergency Operations Centers for monitoring, interagency coordination, and response activities; coordinate with public health and K-12 partners; conduct inter-agency training and exercise opportunities across governments, and; develop strategic communications and public outreach to educate the general public on mitigation and preparedness strategies.

Requested Action

- In concert with local emergency managers, NEMA is requesting Congress codifies one of the COVID-19 supplemental amounts of \$100 million to increase EMPG to an overall funding level of \$455 million in FY24. This will move the community toward ensuring all eligible states and jurisdictions fully-participate in the program.
- Members of both the House and Senate should *include EMPG in Member Request Letters/Submissions* to their respective Appropriations Committee during consideration of the FY24 budget. The below information may be of assistance in crafting the request:

ACCOUNT:

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

PPA:

Federal Assistance

PROGRAM:

Emergency Management Performance Grants

FY23 FUNDING LEVEL:

\$355,000,000

PRESIDENT'S REQUEST:

\$355,000,000

MEMBER REQUEST:

\$455,000,000

JUSTIFICATION:

EMPG directly reduces the need for Federal assistance in responding to events requiring emergency management. With the 50-50 match requirement, any investment in EMPG is essentially doubled with state and local dollars.

**SUPPORT STATES ASSISTING ONE ANOTHER***Emergency Management Assistance Compact*

Using the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC), the 50 states, District of Columbia and territorial members can assist one another during times of emergency or disaster in lieu of Federal assets driving down disaster costs and bringing experience and capabilities to local and state response for a more resilient nation.

Background. Over the past 25 years, EMAC's members share personnel, equipment, and commodities during disasters to assist with response and recovery efforts. EMAC is the only nationally adopted mutual aid system implemented by the state, District, and territorial emergency management agencies on behalf of the governors for an efficient, scalable, and unified response.

Recent Major Accomplishments. Since 2016, states utilized the EMAC system in over 240 events and deployed over 43,000 state, local, and National Guard personnel for disaster response and recovery operations while also supporting over 970 exercise and training events.

Investing in the Nation's Mutual Aid System. The current annual investment of \$2 million is the minimum necessary to support the system used to request and deploy assets; conduct planning, training, and exercises; complete after-action reviews; and implement lessons learned. The use of EMAC and the federal response system's reliance on EMAC continues growing while it remains a more cost-effective alternative to federal assets. An additional \$1 million will strengthen state EMAC capacity and readiness; increase opportunities to deploy local, private, and volunteer resources; integrate EMAC with ongoing risk assessments; and enhance reporting capabilities for states.

Requested Action.

- Maintain the \$2 million included in the budget request and provide up to another \$1 million for enhancements, increased training, and exercises, after action reports, and increased reporting capabilities.
- Members of both the House and Senate should *include EMAC in Member Request Letters/Submissions* to their respective Appropriations Committee during consideration of the FY24 budget. The below information may be of assistance in crafting the request:

ACCOUNT:	Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
PPA:	Operations & Support
PROGRAM:	National Protection Directorate
PRESIDENT'S REQUEST:	Not Called-out in President's Budget
MEMBER REQUEST:	\$3,000,000 (not less than \$2 million)
JUSTIFICATION:	EMAC reduces reliance on Federal assistance, drives down disaster costs and increases expertise at the local level by allowing states to help one another. The \$1 million increase will allow for additional state and local integration and expansion of EMAC.



STREAMLINE RECOVERY PROGRAMS

Utilizing New or Existing Authorities for a Thoughtful and Collaborative Approach Forward

With each major disaster season, emergency managers harness lessons learned. While the Disaster Recovery Reform Act (DRRA) of 2018 addressed many issues throughout disaster programs, opportunities for improvement will always remain. NEMA recommends Congress and the stakeholder community work thoughtfully on shared and coordinated objectives to streamline response and recovery programs including:

Management Costs. Allowing states to utilize management costs across all open disasters would ensure the ability to build recovery and mitigation capacity; incentivize disaster close-out; and drive down the costs of disasters. [S.4654](#) from the 117th Congress is the model legislation for this effort.

Federal Coordination. As FEMA's mission set continues expanding, the agency struggles to help states and locals navigate the federal bureaucracy. For example, disaster programs at the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the Predisaster Mitigation and new Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) programs at FEMA share common goals but offer drastically different avenues by which to achieve those ends. To harmonize these programs, Congress should provide FEMA and HUD with the authorities to work across the federal interagency and allow grantees to blend projects across programs.

Universal Application. The HUD CDBG-DR example also brings to light a simple reform which could streamline many federal disaster programs – the creation of a “universal application.” A universal application would create a process by which information from disaster survivors could be shared across various federal agencies and allow survivors to complete one application for use by FEMA, HUD, the Small Business Administration, and others. Such a process could be extrapolated to recovery and mitigation programs. Efforts to establish a universal application must include language for data sharing so state emergency managers can maintain visibility into applicants, avoid duplication of benefit, and ensure the appropriate utilization of programs.

Wildfire Assistance. Legislation such as [H.R. 8516](#) from the 117th Congress broadens FEMA programs to better understand the needs of wildfire response and enhance accessibility. The Public Assistance Program and Policy Guide should be amended to adequately reflect the wildfire hazard; flexibility should be integrated into the benefit-cost analysis process; and the categorical eligibilities of the Public Assistance program should be updated to match the needs of wildfire response.

Encourage Implementation of Existing Authorities. The Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 (P.L. 115—123) included a provision entitled *Federal Cost-Share Adjustments for Repair, Restoration, and Replacement of Damaged Facilities* (SEC. 20606). This provision allows the President to provide incentives to grantees to invest in measures that increase readiness for, and resilience from, a major disaster by recognizing those investments through a sliding scale that increases the minimum Federal share. Implementing the approved language would give states concrete actions to incentivize resilience and empower them to take proactive steps to drive down disaster costs *before* an incident occurs. Despite the statutory one-year deadline, the lack of movement on implementing Sec. 20606 delays an opportunity for engagement and innovation to incentivize resilient strategies.

**REAFFIRM A COMMITMENT TO NATIONAL PREPAREDNESS*****State Homeland Security Grants, and Education & Training Programs***

In the wake of September 11, 2001, state and local governments immediately reorganized, realigned budgets, and acquired the necessary subject matter expertise to manage myriad Federal requirements and doctrinal changes in preparedness. The diversity and impact of the threats continue evolving, but the task remains the same – *assist the Federal government in achieving specific tasks and elevate the level of preparedness nationwide.*

State and Local Commitment. As demonstrated in the past, the return on investment of the State Homeland Security Program (SHSP) and the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) is clearly demonstrable. Reports show that for every dollar invested by the Federal government, state fusion centers invested an average of \$2.39; state homeland security and emergency management agencies invested \$1.72; and local governments invested \$0.92. These programs help the federal government augment gaps in national preparedness, so funding should be sustained at FY23 levels. When setting national priorities, however, DHS should be required to work closely with stakeholders to ensure adequate input and synchronization of effort. This includes activities such as set-aside amounts or specified percentages for discreet activities.

The Need for Federal Support. Programs such as the Center for Homeland Defense and Security (CHDS), the National Domestic Preparedness Consortium (NDPC), and Emergency Management Institute (EMI) form the bedrock of preparedness efforts. For example, CHDS has:

- Awarded 1,411 Master's degrees to officials at all levels of government (including Federal) and maintains annual enrollment of approximately 160 students.
- Graduated 948 participants through the nine-month Executive Leaders Program and 1,515 in topic focused programs; and,
- Conducted 661 executive education seminars with Governors, Mayors of metropolitan areas, and their respective cabinets including over 64,995 participants including online participants of topical webinars.

Furthermore, in 2022, the NDPC possessed a portfolio of over 200 courses, trained 170,551 individuals, and provided our nation's responders with over 1.4 million hours of training in every state and territory in the nation.

Requested Action

- Encourage Congress to continue supporting SHSGP and UASI programs.
- Encourage Members of Congress to support the continuation of education and training programs such as CHDS (\$18 million), the NDPC (at least \$101 million), and EMI (\$33 million).
- Encourage Members to request the following report language be included in FY24 Appropriations reports: "*The Committee is disappointed in the Department increasing the Law Enforcement Terrorism Prevention Activities (LETPA) set-aside to 35 percent without adequate consultation and justification with grantees and the Committee. While the Committee recognizes the importance of law enforcement activities, each state and community are different and many of these activities may be shared across other disciplines. Indiscriminate increases without input does not consider vast differences across the country.*"