

**NEMA 2024 Mid-Year Forum  
March 17 – 21, 2024  
Washington, DC**

**General Session Minutes**

**March 18, 2024**

**Present      Proxy = p**

**Region I**

Connecticut  
Maine  
Massachusetts  
New Hampshire  
Rhode Island

**Region II**

New Jersey  
New York  
Puerto Rico

**Region III**

Delaware  
District of Columbia  
Maryland  
Pennsylvania  
Virginia  
West Virginia

**Region IV**

Alabama  
Florida  
Kentucky  
North Carolina  
South Carolina  
Mississippi  
Tennessee

**Region V**

Illinois  
Indiana  
Michigan  
Minnesota  
Ohio - proxy  
Wisconsin

**Region VI**

Arkansas  
Louisiana  
New Mexico  
Oklahoma

**Region VII**

Iowa  
Missouri  
Nebraska

**Region VIII**

Colorado  
Montana  
North Dakota - proxy  
South Dakota  
Utah  
Wyoming

**Region IX**

Arizona  
California  
Northern Mariana Islands  
Guam  
Hawaii  
Nevada

**Region X**

Alaska  
Idaho  
Oregon  
Washington

President Russ Strickland (MD) convened the Mid-Year Forum and asked Secretary Bryan Fisher (AK) to call the roll. A quorum was declared. Strickland announced a record attendance at the forum with 690 registrations.

**Hon. Alejandro N. Mayorkas, Secretary, U.S. Department of Homeland Security**

Sec. Mayorkas discussed a range of issues including nation-state threats, combating disinformation, cyber security, climate change, and homeland security grant reform. He announced that the 3 percent minimum spend on homeland security grants has been lifted with the exception of election security. As for the 35 percent Law Enforcement Terrorism Prevention (LETP) set-aside, he recommended that if states remain concerned that they give examples of what other areas are not being funded because of LETP.

**Hon. Deanne Criswell, Administrator, Federal Emergency Management Agency**

Administrator Criswell's remarks focused on the evolving risks and threats and the need for greater resilience. She announced a FEMA partnership with Argonne National Lab to conduct an emergency management capacity study that will result in a report and tool to assist state and local emergency management in determining their resource requirements. FEMA has hired a Small State Rural Advocate that will help rural jurisdictions navigate FEMA and other federal agency disaster assistance programs. FEMA also plans to increase their regional technical assistance to states for capacity building. Pres. Strickland thanked Criswell for her leadership and proactive approach to improving FEMA programs and assistance to disaster survivors.

**David Turk, Deputy Secretary, U.S. Department of Energy**

NEMA Pres. Russ Strickland led a fireside chat with DS Turk. They touched on issues related to the need to increase resilience for energy infrastructure and protect against cybersecurity attacks. Physical security and risk management are key.

**The Intersection between Mitigation and Resilience:** Erin Sutton, Senior Principal, McChrystal Group; Victoria Salinas, Associate Administrator for Resilience, Federal Emergency Management Agency; Casey Tingle, former director, Louisiana Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness; Will Polk, Lynn Budd, Annie Vest

The panel highlighted key points on the intersection between mitigation, resilience, sustainability, and recovery which form a comprehensive approach to addressing the impacts of disasters. An important point was made that you need to understand a community's past in order to understand how to proceed in the future. Resilience must be made tangible to communities because capacity at the local level is a challenge.

**Disaster Lessons Learned from the Maui Wildfire: James Barros, Administrator, Hawaii Emergency Management Agency; James Joseph, Chief of Staff, Tidal Basin Group**

Administrator Barros shared lessons and challenges from the response and recovery to the Maui wildfires including combating misinformation that was challenged through social media by foreign actors; the need to improve sheltering operations, challenges in moving survivors from non-congregate shelters into rental properties while their homes are being rebuilt/repared, and the lack of data sharing between agencies. Moving forward, Hawaii knows that an all-hazards approach must extend beyond wildfires and include such threats as tsunamis and hurricanes, and homeland defense based on Hawaii's location.

**NEMA Business Session:**

Legislative Committee Position Paper on Increased Funding for the Emergency Management Grant Program presented by Chair Shawn Talmadge (VA).

Moved: MI DISPOSITION: PASSED UNANIMOUSLY  
Second: AZ

Secretary's Report – Sec. Fisher presented the 2023 Annual Forum General Session Minutes for approval.

Moved: WY DISPOSITION: PASSED UNANIMOUSLY  
Second: NV

Treasurer's Report – Robert Ezelle reported on the FY24 Year-to-Date Financial Report. Forty-nine states, DC and 4 territories have paid dues. NEMA has exceeded goals for corporate and individual dues, but slightly behind our targets for organizations and students. Last year, NEMA invested a portion of its fund balance with Baird Trust. The current Baird Investment Revenue is \$121,544. Baird investment fees are currently \$9,683. The market value of investments is currently \$1,473.164. The cash investment is \$1,250,000. To date, NEMA has received \$2.665 million in federal funding. NEMA would like to thank its federal funders including FEMA, CDC, and DOE. FY25 Membership Dues: Ezelle thanked the membership for supporting the dues increase that took effect on July 1<sup>st</sup> of this year. It set NEMA on a much more stable financial path for the future. As part of the dues increase approval process, NEMA also approved a policy that allows it to automatically increase membership dues on an annual basis based on the consumer price index. The CPI for 2023 was 3%. In examining the budget and taking into account the dues increase that went into effect this year, plus the increase in forum registration fees, the NEMA Finance Subcommittee felt it best not to increase dues again in FY25. NEMA is in a strong enough financial position to go another year without a dues increase so there will not be one in FY25.

President Strickland closed out the 2024 Mid-Year Forum with a final thank you to all the attendees and sponsors and an invitation to join us for the Annual Forum on October 1-4, 2024 in Baltimore, MD.

There being no further business, a motion was made to adjourn the forum.

Moved: TN DISPOSITION: PASSED UNANIMOUSLY  
Second: VA