

03/19/2018

The Honorable Rodney Frelinghuysen
Chairman
House Committee on Appropriations

The Honorable Nita Lowey
Ranking Member
House Committee on Appropriations

The Honorable John Carter
Chairman
Subcommittee on Homeland Security
House Committee on Appropriations

The Honorable Lucille Roybal-Allard
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Homeland Security
House Committee on Appropriations

Dear Chairman Frelinghuysen, Ranking Member Lowey, Chairman Carter, and Ranking Member Roybal-Allard:

Flood mapping is a critical component of building resilient communities and protecting property and life in the face of disaster. In the face of increasing frequency of flooding that causes untold devastation on our communities, and with the rising cost of disaster assistance, it is more important than ever before to invest in our flood maps.

Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) are developed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) through its Risk Mapping, Assessment, and Planning (Risk MAP) program. FEMA's mapping efforts help communities better understand their flood risks and how they can prepare for those risks. Despite the widespread utility of flood mapping for land use planning that benefits policyholders and non-policyholders alike, FEMA's mapping is currently funded primarily through policy fees that are paid by National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) policyholders. The current funding levels for flood mapping, through both appropriations and fee revenue, are insufficient to map the entire nation and leave entire communities without flood data. Further, without the funding to utilize the latest technology, the flood maps that have been produced have been riddled with inaccuracies that are then the burden of the policyholder or the community to appeal.

According to a comprehensive analysis of the cost of improving our flood maps conducted by the Association of State Floodplain Managers (ASFPM), it would cost up to \$7.5 billion to provide adequate flood maps for all communities in the nation. This is an investment that will save taxpayers money by driving down costs in the event of a disaster. In fact, research shows that taxpayers save over \$2 for every \$1 spent on flood mapping.¹ All taxpayers ultimately pay for the consequences of flooding through emergency relief, and it is high time that we seek to proactively invest in the tools that communities need to better protect themselves so that we can build resilient communities, save more lives, and reduce disaster costs in the long term. **Therefore, we request that you fund FEMA's Risk MAP program at \$1.5 billion in FY 2019, and commit to maintaining this funding level over the next 5 years to invest a total of \$7.5 billion into FEMA's Risk MAP program.**

¹ The Association of State Floodplain Managers, "Flood Mapping for the Nation," March 1, 2013.



MAXINE WATERS
Ranking Member
Committee on Financial Services

Sincerely,



ELIZABETH H. ESTY
Member of Congress

DAVE LOEBSACK
Member of Congress

NYDIA M. VELÁZQUEZ
Member of Congress

LOIS FRANKEL
Member of Congress

NANETTE DIAZ BARRAGAN
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