

United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510-2004

July 24, 2008

Ms. Necolle Maccherone  
Secretary  
Maryland Association of Floodplain and Stormwater Managers  
1304 Concourse Drive, Suite 200  
Linthicum Heights, Maryland 21090

Dear Ms. Maccherone:

Thank you for contacting me to express your concerns relating to S. 3175, the Predisaster Hazard Mitigation Act of 2008, and for making me aware of FEMA's role in the Predisaster Mitigation Program (PDM). I am pleased to inform you that the language of the bill has been modified under Majority Leader Reid to address concerns similar to those your organization has brought to my attention.

The re-authorization for FEMA's Predisaster Mitigation Grant Program is guaranteed under Title VI, Subtitle C of the Predisaster Hazard Mitigation Act of 2008. This Stafford Act program provides grants to states for projects that will mitigate the risks of natural disasters in the future. In addition, during FY 2010, the subtitle authorizes FEMA to make a maximum of five grants to flood control projects eligible under requirements for the PDM. Furthermore, the bill's subtitle also requires FEMA to assess the suitability of using PDM funds for flood control projects and to report this information to Congress. The appropriations for fiscal years 2009, 2010 and 2011 are authorized under this subtitle for \$210 million, \$230 million and \$250 million, respectively.

This bill further reauthorizes the grants as a competitive program that delivers a minimum amount of funding for each state. The subtitle establishes a temporary, pilot program that would analyze how effective PDM funds are used for the five flood control projects. The subtitle would not permanently change the eligibility of the program since the federal government would review the results of the projects before expanding the program. Moreover, funding for the five additional flood control projects would not take money away from the program because of the substantial increase in authorization amounts. Therefore, the bill would not increasingly expand FEMA's responsibilities with the effect of overwhelming the number of PDM projects or redirecting taxpayer money inappropriately.

The new language in the Reid package is supported by the Association of State Floodplain Managers, according to a lead staff person on PDM policy at the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee. The association—whose 6,500 members represent various local, state and federal government agencies, citizen groups and private

Reply To:

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consulting firms—is the supporting organization of professionals involved in issues including floodplain management and flood hazard mitigation.

I appreciate your interest in ensuring that taxpayer money is not spent unnecessarily. I will follow this issue closely and I appreciate you bringing your concerns to my attention. Thank you for your continued support of floodplain management and hazard mitigation in Maryland.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Benjamin L. Cardin". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'B' and a distinct 'C'.

Benjamin L. Cardin  
United States Senator

BLC:in8