

April 8, 2013

Dear Commissioner Martin and Director Ferzan:

We are writing to request the opportunity for a brief period of public review and comment on the New Jersey Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) administrative plan, before it is sent to FEMA for approval.

As you know, New Jersey will have access to approximately \$400 million of federal funding through the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program. These funds are dedicated to helping the state implement long-term hazard mitigation measures that reduce the loss of life and property to natural disasters. They are expected to be the source of the \$250 million property buyout program that Gov. Christie has discussed. In addition, up to 7% of the funds can be used by municipalities, counties and the state for planning to ensure that communities and infrastructure are better prepared for future storms.

Before New Jersey can gain access to the funds, the FEMA regional director must approve the state HGMP administrative plan, a procedural guide for administering the funds. The administrative plan must include a description of the programs that will be funded, eligibility requirements for both applicants and projects, and selection criteria.

As organizations committed to ensuring that our state is more resilient in the face of future natural disasters, we have a keen interest in how HGMP funds will be spent. We write to request that the HGMP administrative plan be released in draft form for a 10-day public comment period before it is sent to FEMA. In addition, we request that the final administrative plan be made available publicly.

This type of transparency can help ensure coordination across all levels of government and among the public, private and philanthropic sectors. We commend the administration on its commitment to rebuilding New Jersey after Superstorm Sandy and recognize the urgency involved.

Sincerely,

Peter Kasabach, Executive Director
New Jersey Future

Sandy Batty, Executive Director
ANJEC

Staci Berger, Executive Director
Housing & Comm. Development Network

Chris Daggett, President and CEO
Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation

Tim Dillingham, Executive Director
American Littoral Society

Charles Latini, President
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Barbara Walsh, Executive Director
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Kevin Walsh, Associate Director
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Cc:

Laurel Blatchford, Executive Director, Hurricane Sandy Rebuilding Task Force, HUD
Michael Passante, New Jersey State Director, Hurricane Sandy Rebuilding Task Force, HUD
Gracia Szczech, Federal Coordinating Officer, FEMA
MaryAnn Tierney, Acting Regional Administrator, FEMA Region II
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