

**NATIONAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION
MITIGATION COMMITTEE
POSITION PAPER**

DATE: March 10, 2009

SUBJECT: Support of Reauthorization of the National Earthquake Hazard Reduction Program (NEHRP) and full funding of the Advanced National Seismic System (ANSS)

DISCUSSION: The Earthquake Hazards Reduction Authorization Act authorizes appropriations for carrying out the Earthquake Hazards Reduction Act of 1977. The program provides funding for the National Science Foundation, FEMA, the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), and the National Institute of Science and Technology. Currently, the authorized funding level for NEHRP is \$191 million for FY 2009. The program's authorization will expire on September 30, 2009.

In addition to NEHRP's scientific and research driven efforts, the program provides assistance that enables States to develop preparedness and response plans as well as increase earthquake awareness. A primary objective of NEHRP is to provide outreach and public education. Other key NEHRP objectives include development of cost-effective measures to reduce earthquake impacts on individuals, the built environment, and society-at-large; providing guidance and recommendations on codes and ordinances to enhance seismic safety; and improving earthquake resilience of communities nationwide.

In 1999, Congress initially authorized funding to the U.S. Geological Survey for an ANSS. This authorization was part of the reauthorization of the National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program (P.L. 106-503). Congress reauthorized the program in 2004 (P.L. 108-360). The ANSS is an initiative to modernize, expand, and integrate seismic monitoring and notification nationwide. This system will provide rapid information within minutes after an earthquake on the distribution and severity of strong ground shaking in urban areas. This information will greatly improve the speed and effectiveness of emergency response, disaster recovery, and enhance our nation's ability to warn of impending tsunamis and volcanic eruptions. The system will provide critical data for research on the nature and causes of strong earthquake shaking. The results of this research will be used in the design and construction of earthquake-resistant homes and structures, and thus prevents damage from future earthquakes. Further, applied research that is sponsored in part by NEHRP may lead to exciting new technologies, such as early earthquake warning, which are vitally important to protecting human life and critical infrastructure as well as guiding response efforts.

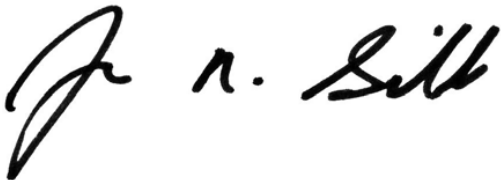
A 2006 National Research Council assessed the economic benefits of improved seismic monitoring proposed under the Advanced National Seismic System (ANSS) program of the U.S. Geological Survey. The report concluded that full deployment of the ANSS could reduce the annualized losses in earthquakes by \$5.6 billion though “providing critical information for land-use planning, building design, insurance, warnings, and emergency preparedness and response”. The report also noted that the annual cost of a fully deployed ANSS is substantially less than the estimated annual benefits of more than \$140 million derived just from design and construction savings enabled by reduced uncertainty in earthquake motions. In FY 2009, ANSS is authorized at \$36 million.

- RECOMMENDATIONS:**
1. NEMA supports the NEHRP program reauthorization during the 111th Congress and calls on Congress and the Administration to provide adequate and predictable funding for the program for fiscal year 2010 and beyond.
 2. NEMA supports adequate and predictable funding for the ANSS at the authorized level.

Moved: West Virginia
Second: Alaska

Disposition: Approved Unanimously

Authenticated:



NEMA Secretary

NEMA 2009 Mid-Year Conference, March 6-10, 2009, Hilton Alexander Mark Center Hotel,
Alexandria, Virginia