



Chairman John Carter

*Subcommittee on Homeland Security
House Committee on Appropriations*

**FY 2016 Budget Hearing – Federal Emergency Management Agency
April 23, 2015
Opening Statement As Prepared**

This morning we welcome FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate to discuss the FY16 FEMA budget request. Administrator, thank you for joining us.

FEMA has a very important mission. You support our citizens and first responders in their greatest time of need. You build capabilities in order to prepare for, protect against, respond to, and recover from a wide variety of threats and hazards. Since 1979, FEMA has had a single vision – “A Nation Prepared”...and Administrator, you do it well.

In 2014, FEMA responded to 45 major disaster declarations. This number is down from 62 in 2013 and the high-water mark of 99 in 2011. However, there is also a significant amount of recovery and mitigation work that continues from past disasters, including Hurricane Sandy.

Your FY16 budget request is \$390 million above FY15. Despite a large unspent balance, \$340 million of the requested increase is for the disaster relief fund. I look forward to discussing whether the increase is appropriate given the recent decrease in major disasters and the substantial carryover balance from previous years.

Your budget request also includes significant increases related to climate change initiatives, such as a Climate Resilience Task Force and the requiring climate change to be considered when developing pre-disaster mitigation plans. In a shrinking budget environment, I would like to hear more about how these initiatives meet the FEMA mission.

With respect to first responder grant funding, your FY16 budget includes a request to fund a consolidated grant program which is not authorized. This is the fourth consecutive year that you have proposed this grant program - a proposal that has continually been denied by Congress. Also, your funding request for grants is once again \$300 million less than the amount appropriated in FY15. I look forward to hearing more about why the new grants program is needed, and why the requested funding level is appropriate.

Before I end, I would like to extend my condolences to the FEMA family on the untimely death of Deputy U.S. Fire Administrator Glynn Gaines. Chief Gaines dedicated his career to the mission of fire safety and rescue, and we are proud of his contributions at both the federal and local level.

Administrator, your written statement will be placed in the record, so I ask you to take five minutes to summarize it. But first, I'd like to recognize Ms. Roybal-Allard, our distinguished Ranking Member, for her opening remarks.

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