

Written Testimony
of
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Before the

Hearing on:
“Reviewing Federal and State Pandemic Supply Preparedness and Response”

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Chairs Small and Payne, Ranking Members Crenshaw and King, and Members of the Committees, thank you for inviting me to testify today about “Reviewing Federal and State Pandemic Supply Preparedness and Response”

While others will focus on the current response, I want to focus on what we can do differently before the next pandemic or other national level disaster.

Establish FEMA as the Federal Government’s Crisis Manager and providing funding from the Disaster Relief Fund to support FEMA response to non-Stafford Act Disasters.

Background: While FEMA is most noted for the coordination of Federal disaster response under a Stafford Act Declaration by the President, other events such as COVID-19 show the need to utilize the crisis management tools that FEMA brings to a response. From supporting USAID in the response to the Haiti Earthquake, CDC during the Ebola crisis, or managing the unaccompanied children crisis on the boarder, FEMA has brought needed capabilities. These responses were managed under the authorities of the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006 - Title I: National Preparedness and Response - (Sec. 101). Amends the

Homeland Security Act of 2002 (the Act) to make extensive revisions to emergency response provisions while keeping the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) within the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). Sets forth provisions regarding FEMA's mission, which shall include: (1) leading the nation's efforts to prepare for, respond to, recover from, and mitigate the risks of, any natural and man-made disaster, including catastrophic incidents; (2) implementing a risk-based, all hazards plus strategy for preparedness; and (3) promoting and planning for the protection, security, resiliency, and post-disaster restoration of critical infrastructure and key resources, including cyber and communications assets.

Amend the Stafford Act to add Pandemic to the definitions for a Major Disaster.

Background: CRS Report for Congress: Would an Influenza Pandemic Qualify as a Major Disaster Under the Stafford Act? October 20, 2008 Edward C. Liu, Legislative Attorney, American Law Division.

Establish a standing Disaster Review Body like the National Transportation Safety Board to review the response to COVID-19 and other major disasters.

Background:

<https://www.healthaffairs.org/doi/10.1377/hblog20180720.168527/full/>

Review all critical national infrastructures for supply chain dependencies outside of the U.S. and determine whether to provide incentives to increase reserves and domestic manufacturing capabilities.

Background: Efficiency is the enemy of Resiliency. Just in time delivery systems and outsourced global supply chains has reduced the cost of many goods and services required for our Nation's

infrastructure. However, that has also created vulnerabilities in global crisis's and disruptions to the supply chains. I would focus on the DHS's definitions of Critical Infrastructure Sectors.

<https://www.cisa.gov/critical-infrastructure-sectors>