



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Statement of Ranking Member Bennie G. Thompson

Emergency Preparedness: Are We Ready For A 21st Century Hugo?

November 21, 2014 (Washington) – Today, Committee on Homeland Security Ranking Member Bennie G. Thompson (D-MS) delivered the following prepared remarks for the Subcommittee on Oversight and Management Efficiency hearing entitled “Emergency Preparedness: Are We Ready For A 21st Century Hugo?”:

“Hurricanes such as Hugo in 1989, and Katrina, Rita and Wilma in 2005 devastated communities and tested emergency preparedness personnel at all levels of government.

As a result, in 2011, the Administration issued Presidential Policy Directive 8, which in concert with the Post-Katrina Emergency Management and Reform Act of 2006 has compelled FEMA to improve its disaster response and recovery efforts.

Also, following Hurricane Sandy in 2012, the Sandy Recovery Improvement Act of 2013 was enacted to overhaul the administration of several disaster assistance programs, and directed FEMA to develop a national mitigation strategy to reduce the costs of future disasters.

I look forward to hearing from our witnesses regarding how FEMA’s policies meet the legal requirements of the Post-Katrina Emergency Management and Reform Act of 2006.

Further, I am eager to hear from the witnesses regarding how the National Preparedness Report impacts the distribution of scarce resources in the current fiscally constrained environment.

Finally, I want to understand how the National Preparedness Report shapes FEMA’s interaction with NOAA, as well as the State and local emergency preparedness agencies and the communities they serve.

When disaster strikes, it is imperative that state and local emergency responders have the tools, resources, and plans in place to act.

For that to be a reality, it is incumbent upon FEMA to work hand in hand with state and local officials before, during, and after a disaster.”

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