



Committee on  
**HOMELAND SECURITY**  
Chairman Peter T. King

**Opening Statement**

March 20, 2012

**Media Contact:** Shane Wolfe

(202) 226-8417

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**Statement of Chairman Gus M. Bilirakis (R-FL)  
Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and  
Communications**

**“Ensuring the Transparency, Efficiency, and Effectiveness of  
Homeland Security Grants”**

**March 20, 2012  
Remarks as Prepared**

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- How would FEMA factor risk when allocating funding under this program?
- Would high-risk urban areas, port authorities, and transit agencies be able to apply directly for funding?
- What is your plan and schedule for meaningful stakeholder engagement on this proposal?

Allocations under the NPGP would rely heavily on a State's Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment, THIRA, and yet nearly a year after the THIRA concept was first introduced as part of the Fiscal Year 2011 grant guidance, grantees have yet to receive guidance on how to conduct the THIRA process. At our hearing last month, Administrator Serino indicated that the guidance would be released by the end of this month – which is fast approaching. When can stakeholders expect to see this long overdue guidance?

Questions also remain as to how local stakeholders would be involved in the THIRA process at the State level. As I discussed with Administrator Serino, it is essential that the local law enforcement, first responders, and emergency managers who are first on the scene of a terrorist attack, natural disaster, or other emergency be involved in this process. They know the threats to their local areas and the capabilities they need to attain to best address them.

In addition to considering the National Preparedness Grant Program proposal, I know that all our Members are interested in FEMA's efforts to develop measures and metrics for these programs. Pursuant to the Redundancy Elimination and Enhanced Performance for Preparedness Grants Act, which was approved by this Committee and signed into law in 2010, FEMA worked with the National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA) to develop performance measures.

While FEMA's collaboration with NAPA was completed months ago, this Committee has yet to receive the resulting report. We recognize that this is

a complex undertaking, but FEMA has been attempting to develop these measurements for years. The time has come to finish the job.

In these difficult budgetary times, we must ensure that vital homeland security grant funding is allocated based on risk and every dollar is leveraged to enhance our preparedness and response capabilities. There is no room for wasteful spending on Sno Cone machines, equipment that doesn't work or is incompatible with current systems, or equipment that sits idle so long that it becomes unusable. When such expenditures are identified, we must take steps to address the problem and allocate the funding to jurisdictions that will make a better use of these funds.

With that, I once again welcome our witnesses. I look forward to your testimony.