



One Hundred Thirteenth Congress  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Committee on Homeland Security  
Washington, DC 20515

March 12, 2014

The Honorable Gene L. Dodaro  
Comptroller General  
Government Accountability Office  
441 G Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20548

Dear Mr. Dodaro:

In May 2007, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) testified before the Committee on Homeland Security, providing Members with the results of a review of the status of emergency management plans in schools. The study, GAO-07-821T, found that, at the time, 32 states reported having laws or policies requiring school districts to have emergency preparedness plans.

It has been nearly seven years since the GAO completed its review of the state of school preparedness, but the need for robust plans in schools has not diminished. The tragedy at Sandy Hook and the tornadoes in Moore, Oklahoma are somber reminders of the need for these plans. As a result, and in furtherance of our shared desire to ensure that our nation's children are safe and secure while in school, we respectfully request that the GAO conduct a new review of school preparedness planning. As part of this review, we would appreciate information on the following: (1) the percentage of states that require schools to have emergency plans; (2) whether school districts are including emergency management officials and first responders in the drafting of these plans; (3) whether the plans adequately address evacuation relocation; child/family reunification; children with disabilities and access and functional needs; and consider all the hazards that might impact the relevant area; and (4) whether schools are exercising their plans, and including emergency response providers in those exercises.

Thank you for the consideration of this request. Please do not hesitate to contact Mr. Eric Heighberger of the Committee's Majority Staff (202-226-8417) or Ms. Moira Bergin of the Committee's Minority Staff (202-226-2616) with any questions about this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Susan W. Brooks".

SUSAN W. BROOKS  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness,  
Response, and Communications

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Donald M. Payne, Jr.".

DONALD M. PAYNE, JR.  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness,  
Response, and Communications