

## Public Safety & Emergency Management Policies and Priorities

The National Association of Regional Councils (NARC) believes emergency preparedness and public safety are best achieved through a holistic and regional approach. Public safety and emergency management take the coordinated efforts of numerous jurisdictions to successfully protect both metropolitan and rural regions of the nation. Involving regional councils in the coordination, planning, response, and recovery efforts will promote safer, healthier and more resilient communities. A network of more than 500 regional councils of government throughout the country covering more than 35,000 of the 39,000 local governments can help develop strategic assessments and plans for assuring communities are prepared.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Federal public safety and emergency management policy should:

- Support regional collaboration and partner with local governments across multiple policy sectors to coordinate and carry out emergency preparedness and public safety goals.
- Invest in public-private partnerships to leverage resources in emergency preparedness.
- Recognize the role of regional planning organizations in emergency preparedness and response as an integral part of resilient communities.
- Fund and support state and local efforts to address the nation's opioid crisis.
- Reauthorize and fully fund the National Flood Insurance Program.

#### NARC also urges the Federal Emergency Management Agency to:

- Ensure regional council representation on FEMA's Regional Advisory Councils and on the FEMA National Advisory Council

#### NARC supports federal legislation that:

- Formalizes the role of regional planning organizations in emergency preparedness and response similar to that of metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) in transportation planning, implementation, and capacity buildings.
- Allocates emergency preparedness, response and recovery funding to urban, suburban and rural localities.
- Establishes a competitive grant program for regional planning organizations to enhance emergency regional planning and response.
- Prioritizes grant funding based on regional or multi-jurisdictional planning and collaborative efforts.
- Streamlines federal homeland security grant application and planning requirements.
- Supports Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI) grants, which establish a strategic direction for the enhancement of regional response capability and capacity.
- Directs the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to extend services offered by the National Cybersecurity and Communications Integration Center to state and local governments

and establishes a new federal grant program designed to assist state and local governments in protecting our digital assets against the threat of cyber-attacks or data breaches.

- Requires states to pass-through a percentage of local funding to develop regional security assessments and plans, including upgrades in GIS or other programs or needed equipment, consistent with local and regional needs assessment.
- Includes public safety and emergency preparedness as key elements of resilient communities
- Provides funding on the basis of identified needs, particularly for critical infrastructure and multi-state regions.
- Promotes interagency sharing of equipment and training opportunities via regional planning organizations among all levels of government.
- Allocates sustainable funding for interoperable communications between local governments, first responders, and citizens.
- Continues the deployment of a nationwide interoperable wireless broadband network for public safety with strong participation and input from local elected officials and regional planning organizations.
- Encourages and provides funding for regional data collection, greater use of GIS and the use of regional scenario planning tools.

**NARC joins with the National Association of Counties and the National League of Cities in calling on the federal government to:**

- Expand access to medication-assisted treatments.
- Provide funding for local efforts to address the opioid crisis.
- Partner with local, regional and state officials to reduce the supply of Fentanyl and Carfentanyl.
- Allow individuals in custody to continue receiving Medicaid benefits until convicted, sentenced and incarcerated and require states to suspend, rather than terminate, Medicaid for individuals in jail.

**NARC also joins with the National Association of Counties in calling on the federal government to:**

- Maintain affordable flood insurance rates so that all households residing in flood zones are able to afford appropriate insurance.
- Ensure that mapping of flood zones is accurate and the process for developing these maps is transparent and involves public input.
- Increase available funds for mitigation to reduce or eliminate the impact of natural disasters.