



# ASSOCIATION OF STATE FLOODPLAIN MANAGERS, INC.

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August 24, 2020

Honorable Richard Shelby  
Chairman  
Senate Appropriations Committee  
Washington D.C. 20510

Honorable Patrick Leahy  
Ranking Minority Member  
Senate Appropriations Committee  
Washington D.C. 20510

Honorable Shelley Moore Capito  
Chairwoman  
Subcommittee on Homeland Security  
Senate Appropriations Committee  
Washington D.C. 20510

Honorable Jon Tester  
Ranking Minority Member  
Subcommittee on Homeland Security  
Senate Appropriations Committee  
Washington D.C. 20510

Dear Senators Shelby, Leahy, Capito and Tester:

**The Association of State Floodplain Managers (ASFPM) urges you to maintain funding for FEMA's flood risk mapping program in Fiscal Year 2021 at the current level of \$263 million.** The House Homeland Security Appropriations bill includes this amount. The Senate Appropriations Committee has consistently recognized the importance of supporting up-to-date and credible flood risk identification. We are very appreciative of this recognition and very much hope you will continue to fund mapping at least at the level in the House bill and the same level as the previous two years.

The President's budget request for FY '21 included only \$100 million for mapping and indicated that flood risk mapping would be completed in FY 2021. ASFPM strongly disagrees with this assumption. The amount requested by the Administration would not even fully support the maintenance of existing and would not support any expansion of the map inventory for the more than 6,500 communities that currently have not flood maps.

Earlier this year, ASFPM released an update of our "Flood Mapping for the Nation" report. That report found that "We are far from completing the initial job of mapping the nation. ... Roughly 1.14 million miles of streams have been mapped out of the approximately 3.5 million miles of rivers and streams in the country, meaning only 33% of the rivers and streams have flood hazard information available. Existing maps must be continually reviewed and updated...". Production of additional mapping layers, including future conditions and areas of residual risk behind levees and below dams was required in the Biggert-Waters flood insurance reauthorization and reform legislation of 2012. In large part, implementation of those requirements has not yet even begun.

According to the ASFPM mapping report, "Direct average annual flood losses have increased from approximately \$4 billion/year in the 1980s to roughly \$17 billion/year between 2010 and 2018. With increases in frequency and amount of heavy rainfall, more frequent and intense hurricanes, and

*Dedicated to reducing flood risk and losses in the nation.*

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# Association of State Floodplain Managers, Inc.

increased development pressure in coastal areas and watersheds, flood losses are expected to continue their upward trend.” Well beyond the use of FEMA’s flood maps for rating of flood insurance policies, the regulatory and non-regulatory map data assists community planners, permitting officials, building code officials and other state and local officials in building development and floodplain management decisions. Additionally, the maps are used by emergency managers to prepare for and execute disaster response. FEMA’s flood risk maps are foundational to understanding and reducing flood related losses of lives and property as well as flood disaster related costs to taxpayers.

The Association of State Floodplain Managers has almost 20,000 members and 37 state chapters covering 41 states. Members are largely state and local officials, but many are the engineers, planners, and other professionals who support local communities. Membership also includes members of research and academic institutions as well as the insurance and lending industries. The mission of ASFPM and its members is to reduce flood related losses in the nation. **Although we have previously recommended an appropriation for mapping at the authorized level of \$400 million, we thank you for noting our very strong recommendation to provide an appropriation of at least \$263 million for FY 2021.**

Your consideration is very much appreciated and we suggest that you contact ASFPM Executive Director, Chad Berginnis, with any questions at [CBerginnis@floods.org](mailto:CBerginnis@floods.org) or (608) 828-3000.

Sincerely,



Chad Berginnis  
ASFPM Executive Director



Carey Johnson  
ASFPM Chair