

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 18, 2010

The Honorable Craig Fugate
Administrator
Federal Emergency Management Agency
500 C Street, SW
Washington, DC 20472

The Honorable Jo-Ellen Darcy
Assistant Secretary for Civil Works
US Army Corps of Engineers
441 G Street, NW
Washington, DC 20314

Dear Administrator Fugate and Secretary Darcy,

The United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and FEMA have distinct but complementary roles in flood prevention and recovery at the local level. Recent hurricanes along the Gulf Coast and flooding in the Midwest have renewed the country's focus on preventing the loss of life and property as a result of flooding, and FEMA is addressing the issue through the Flood Map Modernization Program. Updating our nation's Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) is an important task, and we support the effort to secure better information to educate residents about flood risk in their communities. However, we are very concerned about the way the USACE and FEMA have approached the process and the challenges that has created for affected communities.

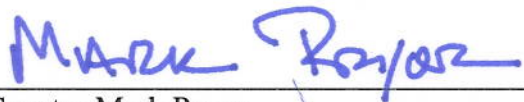
We represent a diverse group of constituents with a variety of problems that have arisen as the FIRMs have been updated. Our constituents have expressed several concerns about the flood mapping program, including:

- A lack of communication and outreach with local stakeholders;
- A lack of coordination between FEMA and USACE in answering questions about flood mapping, flood insurance and flood control infrastructure repairs;
- A lack of recognition of locally funded flood control projects when determining flood zones;
- The affordability of flood insurance;
- Inadequate time and resources to complete repairs to flood control structures before flood maps are finalized, and;
- Potential impacts new flood maps might have on economic development, particularly in small and rural communities.

As you are probably aware, many of us have attempted to address these issues administratively or legislatively on multiple occasions in the past. However, the underlying problems with regard to the Flood Map Modernization Program have yet to be resolved. It is our hope that we are able to work together to find solutions to the overarching problems that our constituents are facing. If legislative solutions are called for, we would welcome your guidance.

To that end, we respectfully request an opportunity to meet with you to discuss levee certification, the Flood Map Modernization Program, and issues relating to the implementation of new FIRMs. If you have any questions or would like to discuss this issue with our staffs, please do not hesitate to contact us. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



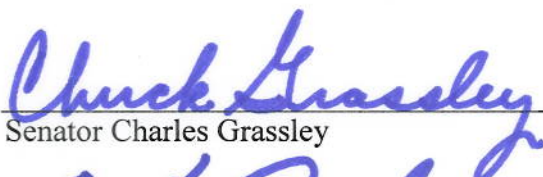
Senator Mark Pryor



Senator Richard Durbin



Senator Thad Cochran



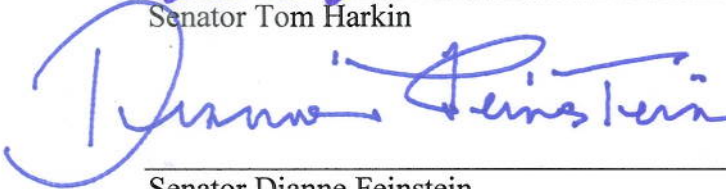
Senator Charles Grassley



Senator Tom Harkin



Senator Christopher Bond



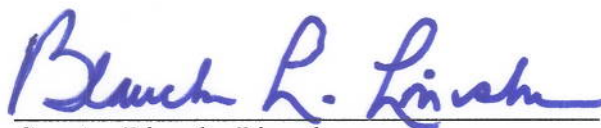
Senator Dianne Feinstein



Senator Sam Brownback



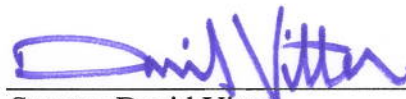
Senator Mary Landrieu



Senator Blanche Lincoln



Senator Frank Lautenberg



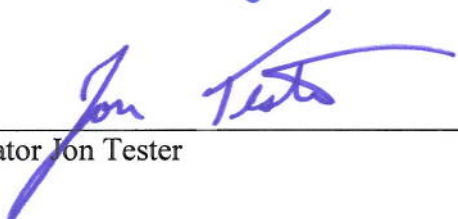
Senator David Vitter



Senator Robert Menendez



Senator Claire McCaskill



Senator Jon Tester



Senator Roland Burris