



AMERICAN PUBLIC WORKS ASSOCIATION

Your Comprehensive
Public Works Resource

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October 27, 2009

The Honorable Janet Napolitano
Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Washington, DC 20528

Dear Secretary Napolitano:

On behalf of the American Public Works Association (APWA), we respectfully request that the Department of Homeland Security revise the FEMA Grant Program Directorate's recent policy regarding the use of preparedness grant funding for sustainment costs.

In a September 22nd email to States addressing its policy on the usage of FEMA preparedness grant funding, FEMA's Grant Program Directorate states that grant recipients "may not use future year preparedness grant funding to pay for additional agreements and user fees. These ongoing sustainment costs are the responsibility of the grantee."

State and local governments are committed to investing the resources needed to ensure the highest levels of preparedness. This policy, however, will have the unintended effect of undermining preparedness at a time of severe budgetary shortfalls. As first responders, public works personnel rely on various types of emergency equipment to effectively execute preparedness, response and recovery operations. Placing limitations on how State, local and tribal governments use their homeland security grants will not only jeopardize the quality of emergency equipment that is relied upon in the wake of catastrophic events—but will also put public works personnel and ultimately, communities at additional risk.

Therefore, APWA urges DHS/FEMA to reverse this policy change and permit homeland security grant recipients to continue to use grant funds to maintain emergency services equipment purchased in previous fiscal years.

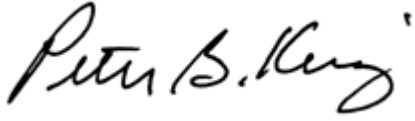
APWA's more than 29,000 members plan, design, build, operate, manage, administer and maintain the water supply, sewage and refuse disposal systems, public buildings, transportation infrastructure and other structures and facilities essential to our nation's economy and way of life.

If we can be of assistance to you or your staff, please feel free to contact me at (202) 408-9541 or pkings@apwa.net.

PRESIDENT
Larry T. Koehle, P.Eng., MPA
Brampton, Ontario
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Peter B. King

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter B. King". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent initial "P".

Peter B. King
APWA Executive Director

cc: APWA Board of Directors
APWA Emergency Management Committee