



April 3, 2020

The Honorable Richard Shelby, Chairman  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
304 Russell SOB  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patrick Leahy, Vice Chairman  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
437 Russell SOB  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Shelly Moore Capito, Chairman  
Subcommittee on Homeland Security  
172 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jon Tester, Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Homeland Security  
311 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairmen Shelby and Capito and Ranking Members Leahy and Tester:

The Business Council for Sustainable Energy (BCSE) supports increased funding for the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and specifically for the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), in the regular appropriations bill for FY2021 or in a coronavirus supplemental. This is important to enhance the ability of FEMA to work with state agencies to make infrastructure investments that not only respond better to the current public health crisis but also to “build back better” and be more resilient to future crises.

BCSE is a coalition of companies and trade associations from the energy efficiency, natural gas and renewable energy sectors. It includes independent electric power producers, investor-owned utilities, public power, manufacturers, commercial end users and service providers in energy and environmental markets. Founded in 1992, the coalition’s diverse business membership is united around the continued revitalization of the economy and the creation of a secure and reliable energy future in America.

BCSE is pleased to have an independent small- and medium-size businesses initiative under its banner, the Clean Energy Business Network (CEBN). Together, BCSE and CEBN represent a broad range of the clean energy economy, from Fortune 200 companies to small businesses working in all 50 states and over 350 Congressional districts. On a national basis, the energy efficiency, natural gas and renewable energy sectors support over 3.2 million U.S. jobs.

The BCSE requests the following:

- 1) New state emergency planning and response grants of \$1 billion, with 10% of the funds directed to state energy offices, and the remainder targeted to state emergency management agencies including coordination between the energy offices, state emergency management agencies, FEMA and the DOE Office of Cybersecurity, Energy Security and Emergency Response; and
- 2) New direct funding to states of \$5 billion for public facility resilience, energy, and water system retrofits to update mission critical facilities, especially including hospitals, schools, community shelters, non-profit nursing homes, and first responder facilities, utilizing private capital for non-interruptible energy generation and microgrids and energy efficiency improvements, with federal funds directed to emergency response upgrades (this program could be operated by state energy offices, which already manage the existing \$5 - \$6 billion per

year in energy service performance contracting programs). In addition, special provision could be made to target underserved rural healthcare facilities.

Updating mission critical facilities, would have the additional benefit of assisting states in responding to hurricanes, floods, wildfires, earthquakes, and other hazards. More energy system resilient facilities with access to longer term back-up power, efficient HVAC, lighting, and hot water systems offer far greater reliability and durability of service for communities.

The BCSE also requests the following as report language or as bill text to ensure that Disaster Recovery Reform Act (DRRA) section 1206(a) is implemented in the near-term:

*The Committee is concerned that the Agency has implemented Disaster Recovery Reform Act section 1206 solely through the Public Assistance program. In so doing, the Agency has not implemented section 1206(a), which permits FEMA to assist communities in adopting or updating building codes post disaster, in training code officials and builders on updated or existing building codes, and in boosting efforts to ensure rebuilding work communitywide is done to code. The Committee urges the Agency to take immediate steps to implement section 1206(a) as required under the law, which will ensure that rebuilding is done to modern standards, helping impacted communities be better positioned to confront future natural hazards.*

BCSE and its members work to improve the resilience of federal infrastructure investments through policy advocacy and resilience planning projects. Specifically, BCSE supported the enactment of the DRRA in 2018 and is currently working to implement the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) program that was established as part of the DRRA. BCSE worked in partnership with the National Association of State Energy Officials, the International Code Council, the US Green Building Council and others, in support of the DRRA. Under the DRRA BRIC program, there are opportunities to support pre-disaster investment to enhance the resilience of critical infrastructure as well as to reform the federal regulations that enable projects to “build back better.” It is essential that federal programs and resources be able to utilize new and improved technologies, materials and applications.

The last decade, as chronicled in the [2020 Sustainable Energy in America Factbook](#), has demonstrated that energy is critical infrastructure. Moreover, in 2019 Congress appropriated more than \$20 billion in weather and climate related disaster funding. The opportunity provided by expanding FY2021 DHS appropriations for FEMA is to rebuild with more resilient energy infrastructure and reduce future pay-outs for disaster relief. Modern, safe, resilient and reliable infrastructure underpins the ability for our country to maintain and rebuild the U.S. economy.

BCSE urges you to enact increased funding for FEMA in fiscal year 2021 appropriations in order to aid FEMA’s efforts to make our country’s infrastructure – energy, transportation, industry, communications and built environment – more resilient.

Sincerely,



Lisa Jacobson, President