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PRESS RELEASE

REPROGRAMMING THE DISASTER RELIEF FUNDS PUTS ASSISTANCE TO DISASTER SURVIVORS AT RISK

The National Emergency Management Association (NEMA) and International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM) today released a joint statement on the reported reprogramming of \$155 million in federal funds from the Disaster Relief Fund (DRF) of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to establish temporary locations for court hearings for asylum-seekers along the southern border of the United States:

The Administration and leadership on Capitol Hill must stop using vital DRF funds to finance other priorities within the Department of Homeland Security outside of FEMA. While the operational impact of this recent reprogramming may be minimal, any funds siphoned from the DRF reduce those funds immediately available to fight wildland fires, preposition equipment for hurricanes, and assist communities across the nation in advance of a known disaster. The reported reprogramming wantonly risks the ability for emergency managers to effectively respond to unforeseen events and unnecessarily circumvents the regular Appropriations process and full consideration by Congress. We oppose this reprogramming and encourage a collective and constructive dialogue on how to ensure our borders are secure without raiding the DRF and risking the timely availability of critical disaster assistance to disaster survivors.

Together, NEMA and IAEM represent the state emergency management directors of the 50 states, territories, and the District of Columbia and more than 5,000 emergency managers at the state and local government levels, tribal nations, the military, colleges and universities, private business and the non-profit sector.

IAEM-USA, the nation's largest emergency management professional association, is a non-profit professional organization representing more than 4,600 emergency management and homeland security professionals for local communities, state and federal disaster officials, private sector, non-governmental organizations and others involved in preparing for, responding to, and recovering from all types of disasters including acts of terrorism. IAEM provides: access to the largest network of emergency management experts who can provide advice and assistance; the Certified Emergency Manager program; annual scholarships; a comprehensive monthly newsletter; and more.

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