

Candidate Statement: West Virginia State Representative for the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM)

To the Valued Regional Members of IAEM,

I Meghan E. Hutchinson, am honored to submit my candidacy for the position of West Virginia State Representative for the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM). With a deep-rooted commitment to enhancing emergency preparedness and response capabilities across our state, coupled with extensive hands-on experience, I believe I am uniquely qualified to serve our vibrant emergency management community.

My Qualifications and Experience

My professional journey has been dedicated to the critical field of emergency management, with a specialized focus on hazardous materials and radiological emergency preparedness. As a Senior Associate for Radiological Emergency Preparedness (REP) at The Olson Group, Ltd., I serve as a subject matter expert, providing strategic guidance and practical solutions. My expertise is underscored by my certification as a Hazardous Materials Technician: Radiation Specialist and as a Certified Radiological Instructor through the Center for Domestic Preparedness.

My experience extends across all levels of government and industry. As the former REP State Agency Coordinator for the West Virginia Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (DHSEM), I shared the responsibility with a coworker for managing all REP programs for our state. This included comprehensive program research and development, employee education, training plan development and execution, and the critical design and evaluation of exercises. I have successfully evaluated various LEPC exercises, providing crucial insights into local response readiness. Furthermore, I serve as the Training Committee Co-Chair for the West Virginia Emergency Management Council, demonstrating my commitment to fostering professional growth and expertise across the state.

I have a proven track record of collaborating with diverse stakeholders, including political leaders, policymakers, industry leaders, and first responders, to build and enhance robust emergency management programs. My hands-on experience includes serving in various response roles during real-world incidents, from the COVID-19 pandemic (where I served as Logistics Chief for the State of West Virginia Center for Threat Preparedness COVID-19 Response) to Hurricane Florence, terroristic threats, and numerous severe weather and flooding events. Notably, I have worked directly with the 35th Civil Support Team (CST) on radiological responses, demonstrating my ability to collaborate with specialized units on complex incidents.

Beyond my professional roles, my commitment to emergency management is reflected in my credentials, including my WV Emergency Manager Level 3 certification and, significantly, my

designation as a Certified Emergency Manager (CEM) from IAEM. This certification is a testament to my dedication to the highest standards of our profession.

My Vision for West Virginia IAEM

If elected as your West Virginia State Representative, I am committed to achieving the following key objectives during my term:

1. **Strengthen Intra-State Collaboration:** I will work tirelessly to foster stronger communication and collaboration among emergency management professionals across all counties and disciplines in West Virginia. By creating more opportunities for networking and shared learning, we can collectively enhance our state's preparedness.
2. **Advocate for West Virginia's Needs:** I will serve as a dedicated voice for West Virginia's unique emergency management challenges and successes within the broader IAEM regional and national frameworks. I will ensure our perspectives are heard and our needs are represented in discussions and policy development.
3. **Promote Professional Development:** I will actively seek out and promote accessible professional development, training, and certification opportunities for all IAEM members in West Virginia, leveraging IAEM resources and partnerships to elevate our collective expertise.
4. **Facilitate Best Practice Sharing:** West Virginia faces distinct hazards, from natural disasters to industrial risks. I will establish platforms for sharing best practices and lessons learned from our experiences, ensuring that valuable knowledge gained from our specific challenges benefits the entire community.
5. **Increase Membership and Engagement:** I aim to grow our IAEM membership in West Virginia and enhance member engagement by demonstrating the tangible value of IAEM resources, networking, and advocacy to emergency management professionals at all career stages.

I am passionate about emergency management and deeply committed to the safety and resilience of West Virginia. My extensive experience, both in state-level program management and on-the-ground response, combined with my dedication to professional growth and collaboration, makes me a strong candidate to represent our state. I humbly ask for your support and your vote to serve as your West Virginia State Representative for IAEM.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Meghan E. Hutchinson

Certified Emergency Manager (CEM)