

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 16, 2016

The Honorable Ander Crenshaw
Chairman
Subcommittee on Financial Services
and General Government
Appropriations
B-300 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jose Serrano
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Financial Services
and General Government
Appropriations
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Crenshaw and Ranking Member Serrano:

As your Subcommittee considers the Fiscal Year 2017 Financial Services and General Government Appropriations bill, we request that you prohibit any funds from being used to implement or administer Executive Order 13690, entitled “Establishing a Federal Flood Risk Management Standard and a Process for Further Soliciting and Considering Stakeholder Input.” Specifically, we request that you include the following bill language under Title VII General Provisions-Government-Wide:

Sec. _____. None of the funds made available by this or any other Act may be used to implement, administer, carry out, modify, revise, or enforce Executive Order 13690 (entitled “Establishing a Federal Flood Risk Management Standard and a Process for Further Soliciting and Considering Stakeholder Input”), including the Federal Flood Risk Management Standard and related implementation guidance.

Language prohibiting the use of federal funds for EO 13690 successfully made it into the base draft text of the FY16 Financial Services and General Government Appropriations bill. Additionally, a limiting amendment to the FY16 Energy and Water Development bill was passed on the House Floor by voice vote. However, this language was not included in the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2016.

Since 1977, Executive Order 11988, entitled “Floodplain Management,” has served as the guideline across federal agencies for implementing flood mitigation policy. It established long-accepted standards, such as the 100 year base flood elevation (BFE), that have provided guidance for federal actions taken within floodplains. However, EO 13690 amends EO 11988 by imposing new floodplain determinations based on increases in the vertical and corresponding lateral freeboard above the 100 year BFE, an unprecedented 500 year BFE (0.2% annual chance), or the best available climate science.

As Members who represent districts located in and around floodplains, we have serious concerns over the effect these revisions could have on federal permitting programs and on the cost of future development, both public and private, in coastal and riverine communities. We also have serious concerns over the lack of requested information provided by this Administration regarding the costs, benefits, and technical justifications for the FFRMS.

Furthermore FEMA, through the Mitigation Framework Leadership Group, developed the standard without input from local officials who will be required to enforce it. It was only after the standard was developed that public listening sessions were held to seek input on how to implement the new requirements, not on the underlying standard itself.

Implementation of the FFRMS will immediately impact over 40 percent of the U.S. population in areas designated as floodplains. This will impose a burden on states, local governments, and stakeholders who have worked for years with federal agencies to develop flood protection systems and develop responsibly within floodplains.

Therefore, we respectfully request that you include the above language in the FY17 Financial Services and General Government Appropriations bill. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



RALPH ABRAHAM, M.D.
Member of Congress



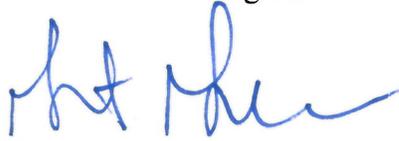
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Member of Congress



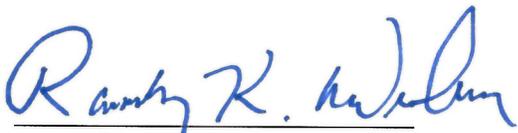
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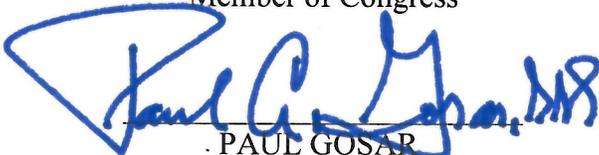
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