

Act with confidence.



April 12, 2007

Mr. Henry Renteria  
Director  
California Governor's Office of  
Emergency Services  
3650 Schriever Avenue  
Rancho Cordova, CA 95741

Ms. Rosario Marin  
Secretary  
California State and Consumer Services  
Agency  
915 Capitol Mall, Suite 200  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Mr. Dale Bonner  
Secretary  
California Business, Transportation and  
Housing Agency  
980 9th Street, Suite 2450  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Ms. Kim Belshe  
Secretary  
California Health and Human Services  
Agency  
1600 Ninth Street, Room 460  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Director Renteria and Secretaries Marin, Bonner and Belshe:

I commend all of you for initiating this inaugural meeting of the Emergency Partnership Advisory Workgroup. I would also like to thank you for the opportunity to provide some insight towards the outcome of an effective and comprehensive public-private partnership program which would enhance California's ability to prepared for, respond to and recover from catastrophic disasters. I, together Mark Ghilarducci and Reggie Salvador in my Sacramento Office, look forward to participating with and assisting this advisory workgroup and the State of California.

As President Clinton's Director of FEMA, I developed and implemented many key public-private partnerships such as Project Impact, Disaster Resistant Universities and Disaster Resistant Communities. In fact, the Disaster Resistant Communities Account as a standing budget line item within California Governor's Office of Emergency Services showcases the legacy that these public-private partnerships hold.

Public-private partnerships are essential to respond effectively to disasters and to assist citizens in an efficient and timely way. States, local governments and individual communities need to plan ahead with local businesses, which are a key asset in times of crisis. One of the key outcomes to establishing these partnerships was that everyone learned and benefited from one another. By working together, government, business and communities are able to utilize resources not otherwise known to be available as well as develop both the skill sets and appreciation of each others roles and responsibilities before a disaster strikes.

Dir. Henry Renteria  
Sec. Rosario Marin  
Sec. Dale Bonner  
Sec. Kimberly Belshe  
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By having businesses work together with government and communities on preparedness, response and recovery issues before a catastrophic disaster, this will enable all parties to effectively respond during and efficiently recover afterwards. It would also ensure that communities are continually working with businesses and government to foster and maintain strong relationships, which are vital to effectively implementing response and recovery strategies.

Another key outcome is to have an inventory of available assets that government could utilize during an emergency. Since Hurricane Katrina, many states have established pre-event agreements to offer this inventory. Public and private entities help meet the increased demand for basic supplies, such as water, food, gas, shelter, communications, fuel, logistics, debris removal, environmental remediation, health and human services and other necessary items, as well as to augment the State's capacity to conduct and process public and individual assistance claims for FEMA eligibility and reimbursement.

Public-private partnerships serve as a crucial asset to emergency preparedness. With the frequency and intensity of natural disasters growing, it is urgent for businesses and governments, including schools, universities and hospitals to be leaders in forming partnerships for disaster and catastrophic preparedness. Emergency situations benefit from the creation of public-private partnerships and the role of business in community preparedness. By working together in public-private partnerships, the State of California will adequately and effectively respond to and recover from catastrophic disasters and thereby lessen the harm to its citizens and businesses.

Sincerely,



James Lee Witt  
Chairman and CEO  
James Lee Witt Associates

cc: Susan Kennedy, Chief of Staff, Governor's Office  
Dan Dunmoyer, Cabinet Secretary, Governor's Office