



NEW YORK STATE
FLOODPLAIN AND STORMWATER MANAGERS ASSOCIATION

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April 15, 2008

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New York Congressional Delegation
Sent by Facsimile

Re: Opposing Pre-Disaster Mitigation Program Earmarks

Dear Congressman:

The New York State Floodplain and Stormwater Managers Association (NYSFSMA) is a statewide professional association dedicated to reducing loss of life and property damage resulting from floods. The NYSFSMA would like to express our concern about the recently identified projects in the Joint Explanatory Statement specified for the Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM) program. These "earmark like" projects were included in the recently passed Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2008 and took more than 40% of the funds out of the competitive grant process. **Our Association opposes project specific set-asides.**

The PDM program is a valuable source of funding that enables New York's municipalities to proactively reduce damages from the state's chronic flooding. Every year there are many more qualified applications for eligible projects than can be funded. Hazard mitigation programs have previously been either apportioned to all states based on specific formulas or triggers, or were nationally competitive based on set criteria that every applicant must follow. This was a simple matter of fairness. Although the application process for PDM funding is cumbersome and difficult, the competitive process increases the chance that funds are used for the best projects. The NYSFSMA thus supports a process that requires compliance with program rules for all funded projects. Project-specific set-asides hurt every state, even those that are the recipients of such earmarks. **The NYSFSMA opposes any efforts to continue this practice in 2009 as it harms New York communities.**

We thank you for your consideration of our above comments. The NYSFSMA would be pleased to discuss with your staff any issues involving flooding and especially flood mitigation. On behalf of our 286-member organization, we are most thankful for your service and we share your commitment to protecting lives and property by making New York more resilient to flooding.

Sincerely,

Janet Thigpen, CFM
Chair