Disaster Assistance: Past Perspectives and Some Considerations for the Future

Loma Prieta Commemorative Symposium

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Federal Disaster Assistance Authorities

- Disaster Relief Act Amendment of 1974
- Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief Act and Emergency Assistance Act (1988)
- Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000
Stafford Act Changes--PA

- Gave overall administrative responsibility to state
- Provided for grantee (state) management costs, and allowance for grantee and subgrantee (applicant) administrative and indirect costs
- Simplified project administration by creating small and large project designations—($36,000 adjusted annually by CPI—now $63,200)
Stafford Act Changes--PA

- Funding for FEMA required hazard mitigation projects
- Expansion of labor cost eligibility to include fringe benefits
- Expanded eligibility for private nonprofit facilities (essential governmental services)
- Changed applicability of current codes and standards
Stafford Act Changes--HM

- Increased authority of State Hazard Mitigation Officer (SHMO)
- Hazard Mitigation Grant Program created with a funded administrative structure
DMA 2000 Changes

- Required state and local hazard mitigation planning to secure certain types of assistance
- Defined Standard and Enhanced Plan requirements and incentives for the states
- Created Pre-disaster Mitigation (PDM) Program
• Public Assistance Pilot Program
  – Small project change
  – Debris removal planning incentives
• National Disaster Housing Strategy
• National Disaster Recovery Strategy
State Disaster Assistance Authorities

- Natural Disaster Assistance Act (1974)
- Campbell-Cortese-Torres Natural Disaster Assistance Act Amendments of 1988
NDAA Amendments 1988

- Expanded applicant pool to include community college and school districts, and PNPs as eligible applicants
- Established standard cost sharing – 75 percent (state)/25 percent (local)
- Direct labor w/benefits eligible
- Cost sharing with federal disaster assistance programs authorized (FEMA, FHWA, NRCS, etc)
- Allowed advance of 90 percent of approved costs
- Provided for Indirect and administrative costs
- “other assistance deemed necessary by the Director.”
Other State Assistance

Disaster Response Emergency Operations Account (DREOA)—administered by state Department of Finance
Considerations for Future

• Require short and long term recovery planning
• Ensure programmatic predictability and flexibility
• Streamline program administration
• Incentivize mitigation as part of the recovery process
• Provide support to civic infrastructure including small businesses and PNPs