

April 21, 2025

The Honorable Kristi Noem  
Secretary of Homeland Security  
1880 2nd Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20528

Dear Secretary Noem,

I am writing on behalf of the more than 160,000 members of the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) to express our concern over the decision to cut funding to the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) program. ASCE is also concerned about the recent decision to pull back on FEMA's commitment to improving standards which inform building codes and help make communities better equipped to survive natural disasters.

Founded in 1852, ASCE is the country's oldest civil engineering organization. Representing civil engineers from private practice, government, industry, and academia, it is ASCE's objective to advance the science and profession of engineering to enhance the welfare of humanity. ASCE is a leader in hazard mitigation efforts aimed at protecting public health, safety, and welfare. ASCE develops and maintains standards that provide technical guidelines for promoting safety, reliability, productivity, and efficiency in civil engineering. Many of our standards are referenced by model building codes and adopted by state and local jurisdictions.

ASCE believes that programs like BRIC are sound investments that ultimately create significant savings for individual taxpayers, as well as local, state, and federal governments. Cuts to BRIC and other FEMA grants and programs will likely prove costly in the long-term because the adoption and enforcement of current building codes and standards remain two of the most effective risk mitigation measures a jurisdiction can undertake. Research has shown that every dollar invested in building to the latest codes and standards results in \$11 of future avoided losses in the event of a disaster. Therefore, advancing disaster resistant building codes through FEMA's policies, programs, guidance, communications, and partnerships with state and local code officials are invaluable steps toward achieving a more resilient nation.

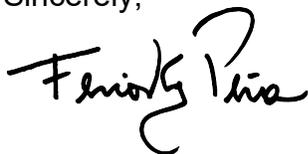
The detrimental impacts of disasters from recent history, along with the billions of dollars in taxpayer resources expended to facilitate recovery, could have been significantly reduced or even prevented with more consistent and frequent adoption and implementation of building codes. FEMA's 2020 report "Building Codes Save: A Nationwide Study," found that adopting the then-current version of the International Codes (I-Codes) would save the U.S. \$600 billion over the next four decades. The adoption and implementation of building codes is a proven low cost, high impact mitigation strategy.

FEMA is a critical component of the National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program (NEHRP) and the National Windstorm Impact Reduction Program (NWIRP). Both programs provide the research needed to better understand the impact of earthquakes and wind hazards. These research results are widely shared and inform the development of standards, such as [ASCE-7 Minimum Design Loads and Associated Criteria for Buildings and Other Structures \(ASCE/SEI 7-22\)](#), and other accepted consensus-based standards. Participation of FEMA staff in the development of these standards is invaluable as they possess the knowledge and experience to inform code development and save lives and prevent economic loss.

Both the BRIC program and FEMA's participation in standards setting are important tools in mitigating the impact of natural disasters. Cutting funding to these efforts will ultimately cost the American public, both in terms of lives lost and economic impact.

Thank you for your consideration of our view, if we can be of further service, please do not hesitate to contact Martin Hight, ASCE Senior Manager for Government Relations at [mhight@asce.org](mailto:mhight@asce.org) or 202-789-7843.

Sincerely,



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