

August 13, 2009

Representative David Drier
Attention Todd Gillenwater,
Legislative Director
233 Cannon HOB
Washington, DC 20515

**SUBJECT: SUPPORT FOR THE COMMUNITY BUILDING CODE ADMINISTRATIVE
GRANT ACT of 2009 (H.R. 2246 and S. 970)**

Dear Representative Drier,

On behalf of the City of Rancho Cucamonga, I am writing to express our support for the Community Building Code Administrative Grant Act of 2009, H.R. 2246 and S. 970. This legislation provides direct support, in the form of competitive grants, to local building safety, fire, and energy conservation code compliance departments around the country. Both pieces of legislation were introduced with bipartisan sponsorship.

Responsible building reduces vulnerability to future hazards such as hurricanes, floods, and fire. Often overlooked, code compliance is an essential component to responsible building. A widely cited study by the National Institute of Building and Science, found that for every \$1 spent on mitigation at the federal level, the American taxpayer saves \$4 in disaster assistance. Currently, there are no dedicated federal funds for building code administration. As a result, codes are sometimes not enforced. More frequently, long delays for inspections occur, leaving communities vulnerable and driving up construction costs and insurance premiums. Code Enforcement also plays a primary role in meeting energy conservation mandates. It's not enough to simply adopt conservation codes-- training and enforcement is crucial to achieving energy consumption and carbon reduction goals.

The Code Grant Bill, and its opportunity for local grants, is needed now more than ever. Local governments are facing financial problems and the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act calls for adoption of the latest 2009 International Energy Code which requires more training for local code officials to enforce the energy code.

This program will not infringe upon local and state authority to enact and enforce building codes. It simply provides sorely-needed resources for them to do so. The bill includes a 5-year sunset on the program, authorizes \$100 million over that period to execute it, and caps awards at \$1

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million per recipient, requires recipients to match a portion of funds received, and outlines eligible uses of funds and selection criteria, with preference offered to governments in financial distress.

The Code Grant bill is strongly supported by the design and construction community and all major property insurers. There is no known opposition and the House of Representatives passed the bill in the 110th Congress. The bill is flexible enough to allow for grants that will permit new code departments to staff up, and existing departments to upgrade equipment, training and technology. Again, I urge you to cosponsor this important piece of legislation.

Sincerely,

Donald J. Kurth, M.D.
Mayor

cc Members of the City Council
 Jack Lam, AICP, City Manager
 Pam Easter, Assistant City Manager
 Trang Huynh, P.E., Building & Safety Official
 Linda Daniels, RDA Director/Acting Deputy City Manager
 Barbara Boxer, US Senator
 Dianne Feinstein, US Senator
 Dennis Moore, Representative
 Mary Landrieu, US Senator