

Reintroduction of Hurricane, Tornado and Related Hazards Research Act

HR 3592 Bill Introduced in U.S. House of Representatives on Dec. 20, 2001

Congressman Dennis Moore (Third District - KS), co-founder of the Wind Hazard Caucus, and Congresswoman Melissa A. Hart (Fourth District - PA) are spear-heading the reintroduction to increase congressional awareness of the lack of federal funding for wind-related damage.

"Living in tornado alley my entire life taught me a lot about the consequences of tornadoes, floods and thunderstorms. Though we can't stop the storms, in this day and age we should be doing everything we can to protect the lives and property that are at risk during our worst natural disasters. This bill will help us take proactive steps to save lives and property," said Moore.

"Natural disasters can cause great hardship, destruction, and in some instances, the loss of human life," said Hart. "While my district does not experience as many wind-related disasters as Rep. Moore's district, I feel that as a member of the House Science Committee, this legislation is important in providing additional funding for research in this area."

At approximately \$5 million, the federal investment to develop and promote knowledge, practices and policies that seek to reduce and eliminate losses from wind related disasters is woefully inadequate. In contrast, the Federal government invests nearly \$100 million per year in the reduction of earthquake losses through the National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program.

In 1992, hurricane Andrew resulted in \$26.5 billion in losses and 61 fatalities. In 1989, hurricane Hugo resulted in \$7 billion in losses and 86 fatalities. In 1998, a calm year according to experts, wind-related storms resulted in more than \$5.5 billion in damages, and at least 186 fatalities. If enacted, the legislation would mandate:

- Coordination of federal wind hazard reduction efforts through a multi-agency National Windstorm Hazard Reduction Program under the jurisdiction of the Office of Science and Technology Policy;
- Program goals of a major, measurable reductions in the loss of life and property due to wind storms within 10 years of enactment date;
- A list of 11 areas where wind hazard reduction research and development, with an emphasis on developing cost-effective and affordable improvements, can pay big dividends;
- Formation of a wind hazard transfer technology program;
- Formation of a National Advisory Committee for Windstorm Hazard Reduction; and Authorization of appropriation levels that could bring the program to parity with the federally-funded earthquake research program over a three-year period.

