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## **BuildStrong Coalition Commends National Mitigation Investment Act at House Transportation and Infrastructure Hearing**

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – The BuildStrong Coalition today commended Reps. Carlos Curbelo (R-FL) and Albio Sires (D-NJ) on their leadership in carrying the National Mitigation Investment Act (NMIA) of 2016 during a hearing held by the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee’s Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Management. Eric Nelson, Senior Vice president of Catastrophe Risk Management and analysis at Travelers and executive committee member of the BuildStrong Coalition, testified at the hearing titled “Controlling the Rising Cost of Federal Responses to Disaster,” on behalf of the BuildStrong Coalition. David Paulison, former director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency and a senior advisor to the BuildStrong Coalition, was unable to attend and submitted written testimony.

“The National Mitigation Investment Act represents an innovative proposal to reform the way the federal government looks at mitigation and disaster spending,” said Nelson during today’s hearing.

“Congressional leaders, policy experts, and the GAO all agree that strong building codes and enhanced pre-disaster mitigation spending would provide life- and cost-saving benefits to the United States.”

This bipartisan National Mitigation Investment Act of 2016 will reform federal disaster policy to incentivize pre-disaster mitigation and resilient construction. It provides an additional 4% in Hazard Mitigation Grants to states with qualifying building code systems following a natural disaster, providing a powerful incentive to states to update their building codes to modern standards. It also authorizes a first of its kind pilot-program to award code enforcement grants to states and localities on a competitive basis, defraying the costs that often prohibit willing states and localities from enacting strong building codes. Finally, the NMIA will authorize a study, commenced through the National Advisory Council, to examine costs and losses from natural disasters; identify what disaster assistance is available from all federal sources (including descriptions of programs, eligibility and authorities), where assistance has been used geographically, how quickly the funds are used, and how that assistance is coordinated among the various agencies and departments.

“Local, state, and federal officials have all expressed their desire to take a more proactive approach to resilience and hazard prevention,” said Paulison. “I urge Congress and the next Administration to listen to

these voices and take steps to reallocate a fraction of the billions we spend on post-disaster assistance for pre-disaster mitigation.”

Nelson and Paulison’s full testimonies are available at <http://buildstrongamerica.com/congressional-testimony/>.

BuildStrong is a coalition of national business and consumer organizations, companies, and emergency management officials dedicated to promoting stronger building codes. For more on the coalition, visit [buildstrongamerica.com](http://buildstrongamerica.com).

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