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**BuildStrong Coalition Applauds Federal Insurance Office Report for Focusing on the Importance of Building Codes to Save Lives and Reduce the Cost of Property Damage**

(Washington, DC – December 12, 2013) The BuildStrong Coalition commended the Federal Insurance Office (FIO) today for focusing on the need for states' adoption of statewide building codes to save lives and to reduce the cost of property damage as part of their report titled "*How To Modernize And Improve The System Of Insurance Regulation In The United States.*"

*The FIO report contained the following passage on building codes:*

*"While difficult to implement mitigation measures for every building in a catastrophe prone area, states and communities investing in the science of mitigation and exploring ways to reduce losses through construction standards may offer the best opportunity for ensuring access to affordable insurance. Proper construction techniques and materials can save lives and reduce both insured losses and taxpayer burden. States should identify, adopt, and implement best practices for construction standards, including building codes, to mitigate losses from natural catastrophes."*

"The BuildStrong Coalition applauds FIO for drawing attention to the importance of boosting the resilience of buildings and infrastructure through building codes," said Jimi Grande, chairman of the BuildStrong Coalition. "When homes and buildings are constructed with strong building codes, it is simply harder for Mother Nature to knock them down."

The BuildStrong Coalition is lobbying Congress to pass the Safe Building Code Incentive Act. This bipartisan bill, which was introduced in May by U.S. Senator Robert Menendez (D-NJ) and U.S. Representative Mario Diaz-Balart (R-FL), would reward states that adopt and enforce model building codes with additional disaster relief from FEMA.

"As FIO and most insurers recognize, strong building codes are our best first line of defense against natural disasters," Grande said. The Safe Building Code Incentive Act will save lives, protect property and ultimately reduce taxpayer exposure to natural disasters."

According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, there have been 25 major disasters over the past two years that have surpassed \$1 billion in economic losses. The economic toll from these events could near \$200 billion when the final figures are tabulated, but the biggest cost, of course, has been the tragic loss of hundreds of lives.

Grande pointed to a landmark study, also used as part of the FIO study, conducted by Louisiana State University's Hurricane Center that found that strong building codes, had they been in widespread use throughout the Gulf region in 2005, would have reduced wind damage from Hurricane Katrina by 80%, saving taxpayers \$8 billion.

*BuildStrong is a coalition of national business and consumer organizations, corporations, and emergency management officials dedicated to stronger building codes, in order to protect homes and buildings from the devastation of natural disasters. For a complete list of members and additional information please visit [www.BuildStrongAmerica.com](http://www.BuildStrongAmerica.com).*

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