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November 20, 2014

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

I am writing to urge you to stop development and cease issuance of any Federal Flood Risk Management Standard (FFRMS), as implemented by Executive Order 11988, until the American people and their representatives in Congress have been given sufficient opportunity to understand the ramifications of any such standard.

As outlined in your draft executive order, FFRMS proposes to modify and amend the Floodplain Management Guidelines to account for uncertainties associated with climate change and will be used as the basis for identifying future flood risk when making federal investment decisions. I am concerned that you may soon finalize a flood risk policy that would have economic implications well beyond the parameters of the federal government without consultation or input from Congress or the American people. Implementing such far-reaching policy unilaterally is perplexing, especially given the strong bipartisan work Congress completed earlier this year with the passage of the Grimm-Cassidy Substitute Amendment to the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act of 2014 (P.L. 113-89).

It is my understanding that FFRMS could dramatically change the flood risk standard for both federal and nonfederal interests; significantly impeding federal investment and heightening compliance costs for many property owners in coastal communities. Military installations, public housing facilities, Veteran Administration facilities, properties receiving Community Development Blocks Grants, along many other examples would be susceptible to a heightened risk management standard. In addition, it is not clear if FFRMS would potentially supplant current base flood elevation as FEMA makes determinations related to flood insurance mapping with consequent insurance purchase and land use mandates for property owners.

As I previously mentioned, Congress has clearly shown a willingness to work in strong bi-partisan fashion on issues related to flood risk. Your decision to act unilaterally without greater transparency on the deliberative process is of great concern. The last thing the people of Louisiana need is more federal policy that disrupts real estate markets and deteriorates home values. For these reasons, **I urge you to not proceed with Executive Order 11988 and vacate the implementation of the proposed Federal Flood Risk Management Standard**, until leaders in both the House and Senate and members of the bi-partisan Congressional Home Protection Caucus have been given ample opportunity to understand and inform the consequences of such action.

Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to your prompt response giving more transparency to the American people.

Sincerely,



Bill Cassidy, M.D.
Member of Congress