

**THE HONORABLE RALPH HALL (R-TX)**  
**Ranking Member, U.S. House Committee on Science and Technology**

**Mark-up**

*H.R. 3791, the Fire Grants Reauthorization Act of 2009*  
*H.R. 3820, the Natural Hazards Risk Reduction Act of 2009*

Wednesday, October 21, 2009  
2318 Rayburn Office Building

Opening Statement

Good morning, Mr. Chairman. I want to thank you for scheduling this mark-up and for the bipartisan spirit in which the bills before us today have been handled. I'll be brief.

We are here to consider two bills that reauthorize four important programs that have been created by this committee over the years. The common thread among these programs is leveraging Federal resources to reduce our vulnerability to hazards—primarily earthquakes, windstorms, and fires.

The first bill before us, H.R. 3820, makes modest changes to improve coordination among Federal agencies responsible for earthquake and windstorm research and hazard mitigation. The second bill, H.R. 3791, reauthorizes the “Fire Grants programs,” which I know have provided critical support to fire departments in my district.

I want to note my strong support for both of these bills, and express my appreciation to Chairman Gordon and his staff for working with us and with outside stakeholders to get the details right on both of these bills. I look forward to discussion on the proposed amendments and to working with our colleagues to see these bills through the rest of the legislative process. I yield back.