COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE, SPACE, AND TECHNOLOGY
CHAIRMAN LAMAR SMITH

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Statement of Research and Technology Subcommittee Chairman Larry Bucshon (R-Ind.)
Hearing on A Review of the National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program

Chairman Bucshon: Earthquakes present a potential hazard to every state in our nation. The U.S. Geological Survey recently updated its *National Seismic Hazard Maps* with research identifying that in the next 50 years, 42 of our 50 states have a chance of experiencing damaging ground shaking from an earthquake. There are 16 states in the U.S. that have a high likelihood of experiencing damage because they have sustained earthquakes with a seismic magnitude of 6 or greater. My home state of Indiana is at risk of experiencing the effects of earthquakes stemming from the New Madrid fault.

Earthquakes are unique among natural hazards because they strike without warning. The cascading nature of an earthquake can induce secondary effects such as landslides, liquefaction, and tsunamis. Earthquakes impact people and communities world-wide from the devastation of loss of life and property to the turmoil caused by the disruption of important services including water, electricity and other utilities or lifelines including roads and bridges.

In 1977, Congress passed the Earthquake Hazards Reduction Act (P.L. 95-124) establishing the National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program (NEHRP) as a long-term earthquake risk reduction program for the United States. Four federal agencies contribute to NEHRP research and activities, the National Institute of Standards and Technology, the National Science Foundation, United States Geological Survey and the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Program activities are focused on: supporting the development of earthquake hazard reduction measures; promoting the adoption of these measures by federal, state, and local governments; improving the understanding of earthquakes and their effects on people and infrastructure; and developing and maintaining the Advanced National Seismic System (ANSS), the George E. Brown Jr. Network for Earthquake Engineering Simulation (NEES), and the Global Seismic Network (GSN).

In Indiana, Purdue University leads the collaborative George E. Brown Jr., Network for Earthquake Engineering Simulation, or NEES. The mission of NEES "is to accelerate improvements in seismic design and performance by serving as an indispensable collaboratory for discovery and innovation."[1]

Support for research and activities that strengthen preparedness for, reduce the impact of, and aid in recovery from earthquakes will fortify the nation's ability to respond to earthquake hazards. Today's hearing is a bipartisan effort to learn about NEHRP and understand the Nation's level of earthquake preparedness. We worked across the aisle to bring together two panels of experts who can shed light on these important issues. I look forward to hearing from all of the witnesses on both of our panels to understand the work of the NEHRP agencies and how that work intersects with engineers, emergency managers and lifeline experts.

[1] https://nees.org/aboutnees/overview