



September 9, 2025

Mr. David Richardson
Acting Administrator
Federal Emergency Management Agency
500 C Street SW
Washington, D.C. 20472

Dear Acting Administrator Richardson:

We write to express urgent concern about the future of the Next Generation Warning System (NGWS) program following the Corporation for Public Broadcasting's (CPB) announcement that it will no longer administer these critical grants. The NGWS program is essential for ensuring that local public media stations, especially those serving rural and underserved communities, can serve as resilient and reliable public safety partners including by functioning as backbones for the Emergency Alert System (EAS) and the Wireless Emergency Alert System (WEA). Without continued support, many communities may face gaps in life-saving alerting during emergencies.

Congress created the NGWS program in 2022 and appropriated \$136 million over three years to modernize local public media stations to meet growing public safety needs and opportunities and to and strengthen the EAS and WEA.¹ In its first year, CPB awarded \$21.6 million to 44 stations in hazard-prone areas, modernizing facilities and expanding reach to ensure communities could rely on public broadcasting during disasters.² Demand has been overwhelming: the second round of applications drew \$110 million in requests from 175 stations, far exceeding available funding.³ This strong response underscores the urgent national need to bolster local alerting capacity and the effectiveness of NGWS in meeting that need.

The CPB has historically been the sole recipient and administrator of the NGWS program. As the national steward of public broadcasting, CPB combined technical expertise, long-standing relationships with local stations, and a dedicated NGWS team to ensure funds reached communities with the greatest need. On August 18, 2025, the CPB announced that it can no longer administer the NGWS program due to its upcoming closure, jeopardizing the close

¹ <https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/2471/text>

² <https://cpb.org/pressroom/CPB-Defunding-Ends-Next-Generation-Warning-System-Grant-Program-Local-Public-Media>

³ Ibid.

relationship between local broadcasters who benefit from these funds and the entity that administers the program. As CPB winds down operations, we worry about the risk of disruption to these critical grants, particularly in rural and underserved communities that rely on public broadcasting as a lifeline during emergencies.

We appreciate that FEMA released a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) For Fiscal Year 2025 for new grant applications on August 6, 2025. However, the nine-day application window and new eligibility requirements will severely limit participation in this historically oversubscribed program. In particular, the NOFO limited eligibility to only State and Tribal government applicants, excluding the very local public broadcasters that benefit from the program. As the federal agency responsible for the NGWS program, FEMA should immediately take the following actions to prevent a gap in support that could undermine local alerting capabilities:

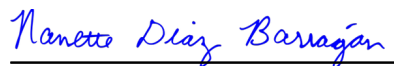
- Assume full responsibility for disbursing all NGWS funds appropriated by Congress, ensuring that rural and underserved communities continue receiving critical alerting support;
- Provide a public plan detailing how FEMA will ensure continuity of the NGWS program, including how grants will be administered, timelines for disbursement, and mechanisms to prevent any gap in support; and
- Brief the House Committee on Homeland Security, House Committee on Energy and Commerce, House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, and Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, within 14 days, on FEMA's plan to safeguard local alerting capacity, including measures to maintain service in rural and underserved areas, and provide regular updates until the transition is complete.

Public safety and ensuring resilient emergency communications are not partisan issues. The NGWS program was created on a bipartisan basis to strengthen our nation's emergency preparedness, and that mission remains as urgent as ever. Members of Congress on both sides of the aisle share the goal of keeping Americans safe, ensuring reliable communication during disasters, and preserving the infrastructure that makes that possible.

Given that the NOFO for Fiscal Year 2025 NGWS Grants sets September 20, 2025, as the funding selection date, Congress and members of the public urgently need a clear plan from FEMA laying out how these grants will be administered.⁴ We urge FEMA to act immediately to ensure the continuity of this critical program and to preserve the resilience of our national alerting systems. We look forward to your prompt response and to working together to guarantee that every community has the emergency communications resources it needs.

Sincerely,

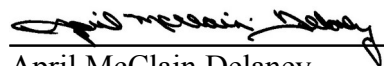
⁴ https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/documents/fema_gpd_ipaws_fy2025-ngws-nofo_08062025.pdf



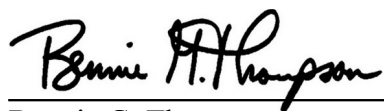
Nanette Diaz Barragán
Member of Congress



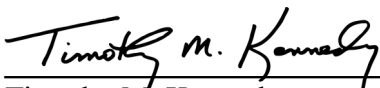
Robert J. Menendez
Member of Congress



April McClain Delaney
Member of Congress



Bennie G. Thompson
Member of Congress



Timothy M. Kennedy
Member of Congress



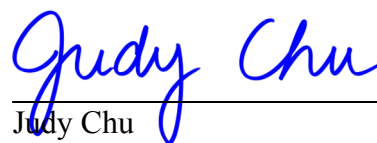
Doris Matsui
Member of Congress



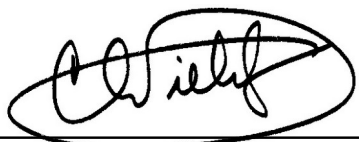
Greg Stanton
Member of Congress



Jared Moskowitz
Member of Congress



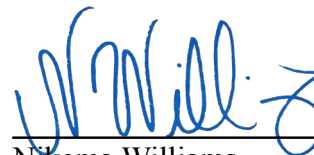
Judy Chu
Member of Congress



Cleo Fields
Member of Congress



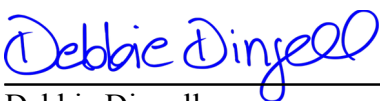
Wesley Bell
Member of Congress



Nikema Williams
Member of Congress



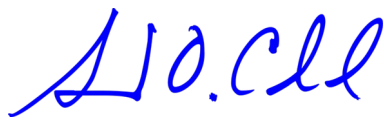
Kevin Mullin
Member of Congress



Debbie Dingell
Member of Congress



Dina Titus
Member of Congress



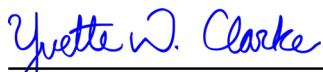
Salud Carbajal
Member of Congress



Brittany Pettersen
Member of Congress



Juan Vargas
Member of Congress



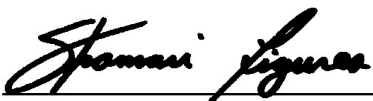
Yvette D. Clarke
Member of Congress



James P. McGovern
Member of Congress



John Garamendi
Member of Congress



Shomari Figures
Member of Congress



Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.
Member of Congress



Kim Schrier, M.D.
Member of Congress



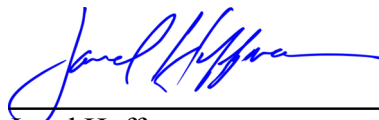
Marc A. Veasey
Member of Congress



Val Hoyle
Member of Congress



Lizzie Fletcher
Member of Congress



Jared Huffman
Member of Congress



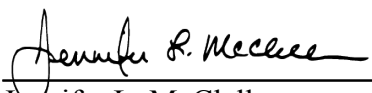
Betty McCollum
Member of Congress



Eugene Simon Vindman
Member of Congress



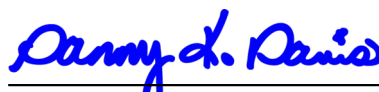
Andre Carson
Member of Congress



Jennifer L. McClellan
Member of Congress



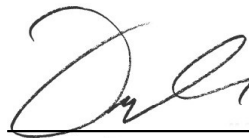
Gwen S. Moore
Member of Congress



Danny K. Davis
Member of Congress



Mary Gay Scanlon
Member of Congress



Troy A. Carter, Sr.
Member of Congress



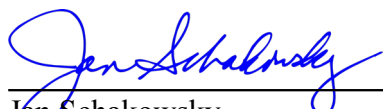
Pramila Jayapal
Member of Congress



Bonnie Watson Coleman
Member of Congress



Diana DeGette
Member of Congress



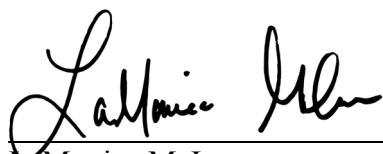
Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress



Zoe Lofgren
Member of Congress



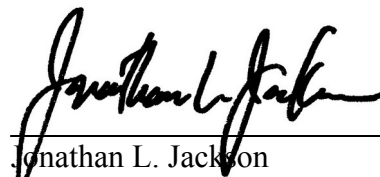
Lloyd Doggett
Member of Congress



LaMonica McIver
Member of Congress



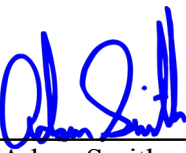
Emanuel Cleaver, II
Member of Congress



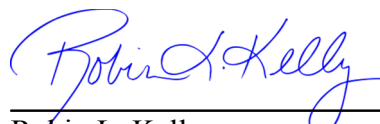
Jonathan L. Jackson
Member of Congress



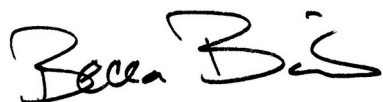
Angie Craig
Member of Congress



Adam Smith
Member of Congress



Robin L. Kelly
Member of Congress



Becca Balint
Member of Congress



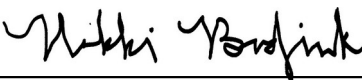
Kathy Castor
Member of Congress



Greg Casar
Member of Congress



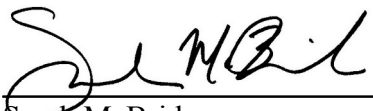
Paul D. Tonko
Member of Congress



Nikki Budzinski
Member of Congress



Greg Landsman
Member of Congress



Sarah McBride
Member of Congress



Scott H. Peters
Member of Congress



Dwight Evans
Member of Congress



Julia Brownley
Member of Congress



Robert C. "Bobby" Scott
Member of Congress