



December 26, 2017

Dear Mr. Mabee:

Thank you for your correspondence to FEMA Administrator Brock Long regarding community preparedness and resilience. Administrator Long asked that I respond on his behalf.

I appreciate you sharing your book, [The Civil Defense Book](#). Involving community groups in the preparedness of their families, homes, businesses, and schools is a central tenet of FEMA's work. The Whole Community approach to emergency management remains a critical component of the National Preparedness System designed to do just as you state: achieve a more prepared and resilient United States. To that end, FEMA provides a great deal of information on how individuals and families can get prepared for emergencies on the www.ready.gov website.

Your letter also mentions the importance of "grassroots, bottom-up" efforts in building resilient communities. I also believe this to be a critical component of developing local capabilities to handle likely hazards. In fact, the 2017 National Preparedness Report (www.fema.gov/national-preparedness-report) highlights many of these types of efforts that made a difference in recent disasters. One of the most inspiring, in my opinion, relates to housing disaster survivors after the August 2016 flooding in Louisiana:

During the August flooding in Louisiana, FEMA created a Multi-Agency Shelter Transition Task Force to transition survivors from shelters into temporary housing. Task force teams comprised representatives from Federal and nongovernmental organizations, including FEMA, the American Red Cross, and Catholic Charities. Teams reviewed survivor cases as a group, which increased coordination of resources across agencies and organizations to best support the needs of disaster survivors, including maintaining the health, independence, and self-determination of individuals with disabilities. (p.70)

Through your efforts and ours, as well as the work of all emergency managers, I believe we can build these kinds of collaborations across the country. We can prepare communities to manage the hazards and threats they face. Together, we can address this challenge and move the nation forward.

If you would like to discuss community resilience with some of our FEMA professionals, I encourage you to contact Matt Lyttle (matthew.lyttle@fema.dhs.gov) in the National Preparedness Directorate's Individual and Community Preparedness Division. That Division manages many of the FEMA programs and activities designed to build grassroots community resilience. Again, I thank you for your commitment to community preparedness and your efforts to build a stronger nation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kathleen M. Fox".

Kathleen M. Fox, Acting Deputy Administrator
Protection and National Preparedness
Federal Emergency Management Agency