

Advisory Committee on **Earthquake** Hazards Reduction
National **Earthquake** Hazards Reduction Program

May 4, 2009

The Honorable Patrick D. Gallagher
Deputy Director
National Institute of Standards and Technology
Building 101, Room A1134
100 Bureau Drive
Gaithersburg, MD 20899-1000

Reference: Annual Report of the Effectiveness of the NEHRP
Advisory Committee on Earthquake Hazard Reduction

Dear Dr. Gallagher:

We are pleased to once again report to you and the Interagency Coordinating Committee on the effectiveness of the National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program (NEHRP), as stipulated in our Charter and Public Law 108-360. By statute, we are charged to report to you and assess the Program's trends and developments in science and engineering, the effectiveness in performing its statutory activities, the need for revision, and the management, coordination, implementation and activities, and we offer recommendations for ways to improve the Program.

Our 2008 report provided our first complete assessment of NEHRP, and made a host of recommendations. We recognize that it will take some time to implement those recommendations and believe that sufficient progress is being made. We are pleased that the NEHRP Strategic Plan has been completed and is undergoing implementation. The Plan is very well conceived and offers a positive vision for the future of the Program. We look forward to receiving the management plan. We are also pleased that you have retained the National Research Council to develop a twenty-year roadmap for the research and implementation activities needed to support the goals and objectives outlined in the Plan. This independent assessment, with cost estimates included, will greatly improve our collective ability to plan for the future.

In reviewing our 2008 report, we remain comfortable with our assessment of the new trends and developments in earthquake science and engineering, and will not repeat that information in this report. We are working this year to develop more information and specific additional recommendations related to three of the areas discussed. These areas include social science research and implementation, lifelines research and implementation, and the need for long-term funding for multidisciplinary research. We intend to submit a comprehensive report that includes these developing recommendations in 2010.



We continue to be quite satisfied with the growing effectiveness of the Program and the revisions that are being instituted. We are pleased that funding for the Program is growing and becoming more stable, and that staff has been added to the NEHRP Office.

We believe that the most significant effort this year to improve the Program needs to focus on its reauthorization by the 111th Congress. We have written to you separately about the areas in the Program that we believe should be modified in the reauthorizing legislation. They include adjustments in some agency responsibilities, enhanced attention to the lifelines that serve the Nation, incorporation of an interagency working group, expanding the support role for the NEES Program to the President's Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP), directed support for multidisciplinary research needed to advance earthquake science and engineering, and support for multi-hazard demonstration projects. We trust that our suggestions will be instituted both within the legislation and also with the management of the Program. A copy of our letter is enclosed.

We look forward to our continued association with the NEHRP. We appreciate your willingness to dialog with us and support our activities by creating an open and collaborative environment. Please contact us if you have any questions or wish to further discuss our suggestions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Poland". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Chris D. Poland, Chair
Advisory Committee on Earthquake Hazards Reduction
National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program

Enclosure