



**Joint Legislative Public Hearings
2014-2015 Executive Budget Proposal
Public Protection
Senate Finance & Assembly Ways and Means Committees
February 5, 2014**

FY 2014-2015 Budget Testimony
NYS Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services

Good morning Chairman Farrell, Chairman DeFrancisco and distinguished members of the Senate Finance and Assembly Ways and Means Committees.

My name is Andrew Feeney. I am Deputy Commissioner for Special Projects at the New York State Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services. I am joined by my colleague Michael Perrin, Deputy Commissioner for Administration and Finance.

I am pleased to appear before this joint session today on behalf of Commissioner Hauer and the Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services to highlight some of the work and accomplishments of the agency over the past year, while looking forward to next fiscal year as we fulfill Governor Cuomo's commitment to strengthen our state's infrastructure, help make our communities more resilient, and protect our citizens from future emergencies and disasters.

From the inception of his administration, the Governor has made strengthening emergency management in the State one of his highest priorities. In his State of the State, the Governor outlined a roadmap detailing his vision for enhancing the State's collective capabilities in the coming year. With support for new initiatives within the Division, Governor Cuomo has laid out a creative and thoughtful road map for ensuring that the State will be better prepared and responsive to future disasters such as those we have experienced over the past three years.

These investments include:

- **\$15 million** for a state-of-the-art weather detection system that will increase the number of weather stations across the state from 27 to approximately 125 and provide an accelerated and improved weather reporting network, which will enable first responders to prepare better and react more effectively to extreme weather events.
- **\$15 million** to establish the SUNY College of Emergency Preparedness, Homeland Security and Cybersecurity, which will be a truly groundbreaking and comprehensive institution that will bring together academic and professional disciplines to cultivate the very best in law enforcement, security, emergency management, counterterrorism, cybersecurity and other related disciplines, thereby reinforcing the State's leadership in national and international security.
- **\$3 million** for the development and implementation of a statewide citizen preparedness training effort, which will be coordinated jointly by DHSES and DMNA.
- **\$75 million** for further expansion of the State's interoperable communications capabilities, which has already been developed over the last several years with \$200 million in grants to counties.
- Expanding the nation's first state-based strategic fuel reserve. There were many lessons learned from Superstorm Sandy and the availability and accessibility of fuel for emergency responders was perhaps one of the most prominent among them. The Governor responded very aggressively by establishing such a strategic fuel reserve on Long Island and with this wise investment, the system will now be expanded across the state.
- Installing back-up power capacity at an estimated 241 Upstate gas stations located within a half mile of exits on critical highways. This expands the Governor's initial investment for such back-up power capabilities at similar locations Downstate.

Each disaster or emergency present challenges that provide opportunities for improving how we do what we do, integrating these lessons into our operations and implementing them for the safety of all New Yorkers. The Governor has been clear in his message: *get out there sooner and do it faster.*

And that is exactly what the State has done.

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As we all know, and have witnessed very graphically, there is a new normal for extreme weather. To meet the challenges presented by these extreme weather events, the State is committed to strengthening its emergency preparedness capabilities and we look forward to making this a reality with your support. Some examples of actions directed by the Governor to prepare for recent storms have included: closing impacted roadways (e.g., LIE; NYS Thruway near Buffalo), redeployment of state assets to affected areas (e.g., moving DOT snowplows from Upstate New York to Long Island for blizzards), and extending the Public Service Commission's hotlines hours.

As we move forward to plan and prepare for future events, we can never lose sight of our continued responsibility to manage the aftermath of past storms, including Sandy, Irene and Lee.

We cannot forget that many counties are still in the midst of recovery; DHSES has been in full motion pushing dollars out the door to fund these recovery efforts. To date, DHSES has disbursed \$2.2 billion in infrastructure funding and FEMA has approved \$1.2 billion in Individual Assistance funds to the communities affected by these storms.

Those impacted include our families, neighbors and many are your constituents. Having said that, I want to take a quick moment to thank each of you for your support in doing everything we can to bring a sense of normalcy back to the lives of those so severely impacted by these storms.

In addition to disaster funding, counterterrorism and all-hazard preparedness funding also continues to be invested in all areas of the State.

In 2013, New York State received almost \$67 million in State Homeland Security Grant funding and over \$174 million in Urban Area Security funding for the New York City area. In addition, 11 New York State law enforcement entities received an additional \$1.7 million in Operation Stonegarden funding and will be working with the U.S. Customs and Border Patrol on federally-approved operations. Additionally, we received over \$3 million in funding for 46 non-profit organizations in the NYC urban area to make their facilities more secure.

A percentage of these funds were awarded for specialized, targeted purposes. Some of these purposes included law enforcement tactical teams, urban search and rescue, hazardous materials response teams, bomb squad development, explosive detection canines and critical infrastructure protection.

This past year, DHSES continued its practice of holding regional workshops to provide up-to-date information and discuss trends with local grantees and solicit feedback to ensure the State is doing everything it can to support local counterterrorism and emergency preparedness efforts.

Most recently, DHSES initiated the process of revising the State's Homeland Security Strategy, which is currently published for statewide review and comment.

Homeland Security preparedness funding for federal fiscal year 2014 is yet to be finalized, but we do know that the House passed a \$1.1 trillion budget which, nationally, includes \$466 million for the State Homeland Security Grant Program, \$600 million for the Urban Area Security Initiative and \$55 million for Operation Stonegarden.

The good news is that the proposed 2014 figures would represent a net increase in national funding of approximately \$110 million across the three programs, which will likely translate into an increase in dollars for New York State, and in the grants we provide local governments for planning and preparedness needs.

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In terms of state-funded grants, during 2013 DHSES conducted two additional solicitations under the State Interoperability Communication Grant program for which there was widespread participation from counties. The Grant supports the critically important development of intergovernmental regional communications partnerships throughout the State; 90% of the State's counties participate in a regional consortium and our goal this coming year is make that 100%. To date \$206 million has been awarded to 54 counties through this program. DHSES hopes to release the final public safety answering point grant application soon.

Further illustrating his commitment to strengthening the State's emergency preparedness capabilities, the Governor this past October convened a Conference on Emergency Preparedness during which he unveiled a statewide Emergency Management Certification and Training Program. This initiative established the State's first-ever uniform disaster response protocols for first responders and local officials with the goal of establishing a more effective and streamlined emergency response on all levels of government. The initial four-day training session took place in November in Albany at no cost to the local government elected officials and emergency management professionals.

In addition to this important new initiative, DHSES continues to expand and enhance its training programs in communities across the State as well as at the State Fire Academy in Montour Falls and the State Preparedness Training Center in Oriskany. In 2013, DHSES trained over 64,000 emergency management and emergency response professionals, representing an overall 11% increase from 2012. Much of this growth occurred in programs and activities associated with the State Preparedness Training Center with an increase of over 6000 trained, which represented an 83% increase in its utilization from 2012.

Also, at the Governor's direction, DHSES assisted in the development of Rapid Response Support Teams (RRSTs) that will align with the new response areas to promptly deploy in emergency situations and coordinate state support with local governments. The teams will include representatives from the State Office of Emergency Management, State Police, National Guard, and other agencies.

The transformation for the Division over the last several years has not been without its challenges and complexities, but the integration of the State's homeland security, emergency management and emergency services into a single enterprise has advanced the strategic position of the State to respond more effectively to all hazards.

Again, I want to thank you, Chairman Farrell, Chairman DeFrancisco and members of the joint committee for the opportunity to testify today. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.