

COALITION LETTER SUPPORTING
PRESIDENTIAL FUNDING REQUEST FOR 3DEP

June 8, 2016

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Chairman

The Honorable Tom Udall
Ranking Member

Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies
U.S. Senate
Washington D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Murkowski and Ranking Member Udall:

We, the undersigned organizations, enthusiastically support the USGS 3DEP, or 3-D elevation program. We respectfully urge your subcommittee to fully fund this important program as requested in the President's budget, or, if possible, increase the appropriations level to meet the extraordinary demand for current, accurate elevation data for the nation.

3DEP will satisfy the growing demand for consistent, high-quality topographic data and a wide range of other three-dimensional representations of the Nation's natural and constructed features. Among the applications that will benefit from 3DEP data are flood risk management, agriculture, water supply, homeland security, renewable energy, aviation safety, telecommunications, infrastructure, and other areas. Indeed, USGS has identified more than 600 applications that would benefit from such enhanced elevation data. 3DEP will promote economic growth, facilitate responsible environmental protection and resource development and management, assist with infrastructure improvement, and generally enhance the quality of life of all Americans.

The USGS, with involvement from the private sector and other stakeholders, conducted a National Enhanced Elevation Assessment (NEEA), to determine and document the need for national elevation data within government and private markets. The results indicated that enhanced elevation data have the potential to generate \$13 billion in annual benefits, at a benefit:cost ratio of 4.7 to 1.

In conclusion, our request and recommendations to your Subcommittee are:

For FY 2017, Congress should appropriate funds for the 3DEP program at its optimal annual level of \$146 million among all participating agencies. Within FY 2016, USGS was appropriated \$5.4 million for 3DEP. Our request and recommendation is to provide for a \$4.6 million increase for 3DEP as found in the President's FY 2017 request for USGS, thereby increasing the USGS amount for 3DEP to \$10 million for FY 2017.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our views and we look forward to working with the subcommittee to continue the work to build on past success and further improve the Interior Department's surveying, mapping and geospatial activities.

Respectfully,

Dr. Pat Leahy
Executive Director
American Geosciences Institute (AGI)



Harvey Thorleifson
Mapping Chair
Association of American State Geologists (AASG)



Chad Berginnis, CFM
Executive Director
Association of State Floodplain Managers (ASFPM)



John Farner
Government and Public Affairs Director
Irrigation Association (IA)



John M. Palatiello
Executive Director
MAPPS



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Greg Brown
Senior Vice President, Government Affairs
National Apartment Association (NAA)



James W. Tobin III
Executive Vice President & Chief Lobbyist
National Association of Home Builders (NAHB)



Jerry Giovaniello
Senior Vice President, Government Affairs
National Association of REALTORS®



Todd Schlekeway
Executive Director
National Association of Tower Erectors (NATE)



Cindy Chetti
Senior Vice President, Government Affairs
National Multifamily Housing Council (NMHC)



Curtis W. Sumner, LS (VA)
Executive Director
National Society of Professional Surveyors (NSPS)



Chris Diller
President
National States Geographic Information Council (NSGIC)



1856 Old Reston Avenue, Suite 205
Reston, Virginia 20190
P (703) 787-6996; F (703) 787-7550