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# RHODE ISLAND HOMELAND SECURITY PRIORITIES: PREPARATION FOR THE 2006 HURRICANE SEASON

## HEARING

BEFORE THE

## COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS UNITED STATES SENATE

ONE HUNDRED NINTH CONGRESS

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# RHODE ISLAND HOMELAND SECURITY PRIORITIES: PREPARATION FOR THE 2006 HURRICANE SEASON

**THURSDAY, APRIL 20, 2006**

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY
AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS,
*Providence, Rhode Island*

The Committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:30 a.m., at the Rhode Island Foundation, the Rhode Island Room, 40 Exchange Street, Providence, Rhode Island, Hon. Susan M. Collins, Chairman of the Committee, presiding.

Present: Senators Collins and Chafee.

## OPENING STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN COLLINS

Chairman COLLINS. The Committee will come to order. Good morning. Today, the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs will conduct a hearing on the homeland security priorities of the State of Rhode Island with special emphasis on preparedness for the upcoming 2006 hurricane season.

Let me begin this morning by thanking my friend and colleague, Senator Lincoln Chafee, for his leadership in developing this important hearing, for inviting me to come here today, and for his many important contributions to the Committee's work in so many different areas.

Rhode Island faces considerable homeland security challenges. In addition to being a major transportation hub with an increasingly busy international cargo port and being a center of industry, research, education, and recreation, Rhode Island has the second highest population density in the Nation. A disaster here, whether natural or manmade, could have especially dire consequences. By examining in detail the homeland security challenges of one State, we hope to gain a better understanding of the challenges faced by other States.

Rhode Island is a microcosm of the homeland security issues that must be addressed, particularly in other coastal States. The Governor was making the point to me that Rhode Island, while small, has more than 400 miles of coast land. Senator Chafee made the point to me that even though Rhode Island is very small geographically, it has a very concentrated population. That means there are special challenges in dealing with the homeland security implications. Rhode Island is particularly vulnerable to hurricanes. Of its 39 municipalities, 21 have coastal shorelines and two-thirds of the

State's population lives in those 21 communities. Because of its small size, the entire State is considered to be coastal. Therefore, our focus on hurricane preparation is especially important this morning and timely, considering that hurricane season starts on June 1.

Our Committee, as many of you may know, has been conducting and is about to conclude our investigation into the preparedness for and response to Hurricane Katrina. This is the most extensive investigation the Committee has ever conducted. It has spanned nearly 8 months with 21 hearings to date and testimony from more than 80 witnesses. In addition, Committee staff have conducted more than 300 formal interviews and examined some 820,000 pages of documents. Our final report will be released soon, probably within the next 2 weeks. It will include our findings on a deeply flawed response that resulted in needless suffering and loss of life. It will also shine a spotlight on the failure of the partnership of emergency management agencies across all levels of government. It will include our recommendations on how best to rebuild and strengthen this partnership so that the failures of Katrina are never repeated. The fact that the 2006 hurricane season is barely a month away adds special urgency to our work.

This region is by no means immune from hurricanes. Hurricane Bob in 1991 was small in size but highly concentrated in power. It struck Block Island and then the Rhode Island coast at high tide, causing heavy damage in Newport. It is an example seen time and time again during Katrina of how a storm can impede disaster response. Winds in excess of 100 miles per hour caused severe damage to police and fire stations in Bristol, Barrington, and Narragansett. As with Katrina, Hurricane Bob arrived with ample warning, but public officials had a difficult time convincing residents to evacuate. Hurricane Bob cost an estimated $900 million in property damage, caused 17 deaths, and left more than 2 million people without power.

Hurricane Carol in 1954 was the second most destructive hurricane to hit the Northeast in the 20st Century, and Rhode Island bore its brunt. From Westerly to Newport, more than 5,000 buildings were destroyed and 66 lives were lost. At the time, Carol was the most expensive hurricane ever to hit the United States.

And, of course, the most powerful storm ever to hit the Northeast was the legendary hurricane of 1938. The so-called Long Island Express slammed into Narragansett Bay with wind gusts exceeding 180 miles per hour. It produced some of the most extensive and damaging river flooding ever seen and caused more than 600 deaths. I stayed at the Biltmore Hotel last night and saw in the lobby the pictures and also the plaque showing how high the water rose. I don't know whether that was part of the plan to make sure that I really understood what hurricanes could do to your State, Senator Chafee, but it was very effective indeed.

Clearly, New England is by no means immune from hurricanes and the scientists tell us that more devastating hurricanes are likely to be on the way this season. The 2005 hurricane season was brutal with a record-setting 27 storms, including 15 hurricanes. This year could even be worse. Forecasters say that the Atlantic is in a period of increased hurricane activity that could last another

decade or longer. And water temperatures are high, and that is not a good sign. We must learn the lessons of Katrina, and we must assist States like Rhode Island in meeting the challenges.

Our witnesses today are here to help us do just that. I thank you all for coming and for your participation, and I'm sure your insights, knowledge, and experience will help better prepare Rhode Island for whatever disasters come your way and help our entire Nation, as well.

It's now my great pleasure to call on Rhode Island's own Senator, Senator Lincoln Chafee, for his opening statement. Senator Chafee.

**OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR CHAFEE**

Senator CHAFEE. Thank you very much, Senator Collins, and welcome to Rhode Island for this important hearing of the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, of which you are Chairman.

Hurricane Katrina, as you said, showed us all in a very vivid fashion that protecting our Nation comes in many different forms. Over the past 6 months, Senator Collins has led our Committee through an extensive series of hearings on the Federal, State, and local response to Hurricane Katrina. We have found numerous serious problems in coordination between key government agencies. We're working to correct these problems to ensure they do not happen again.

As Senator Collins said, Rhode Island is no stranger to hurricanes. Of course, in 1938 we had a Category 3 with winds, as Senator Collins said, of 180 miles an hour and a 16-foot tidal surge, which flooded Providence with 14 feet of water, and also we lost 200 lives here in Rhode Island.

In 1954, Hurricane Carol hit with a 13-foot storm surge that affected many area islands, tidal coastal communities. Downtown Providence, again, water reached 13 feet above normal. And, as Senator Collins said, we lost 66 lives here in Rhode Island in Hurricane Carol.

And more recently, we've also had Hurricane Gloria in 1985 and Hurricane Bob in 1991.

Today we are very fortunate to have key Federal and State officials with us to discuss our preparations for the 2006 hurricane season here in Rhode Island. We are pleased to have Governor Carcieri here to discuss our State's preparations and discuss what resources have been dedicated to hurricane preparation and what additional resources may be necessary. We are also fortunate to have Mayor Cicilline with us to discuss disaster preparation in the capital city. Also, we have Ken Horak who leads FEMA's work in Region 1 to discuss the Federal role in disaster preparation. And on the second panel, we will hear from gentlemen who are ensuring that Rhode Island is prepared for all potential disasters; the Executive Director of Rhode Island's Emergency Management Agency, Robert Warren, and the Adjutant General of the Rhode Island National Guard, Major General Robert Bray. And finally, as the former Mayor of the City of Warwick, we are pleased to have John Chartier here to discuss hurricane preparations from his perspective as head of Emergency Management for the City of Warwick.

I know that Jack has just returned from the National Hurricane Conference, and we are eager to learn what he learned there.

Thank you, Chairman Collins, for coming to Rhode Island to allow us to discuss this important issue to assure we are fully prepared for the 2006 season. I look forward to hearing everybody's testimony.

Chairman COLLINS. Thank you, Senator. I can think of no better person to lead off this hearing today than the Governor of Rhode Island. Senator Chafee is always reminding us in the Senate that Rhode Island has as its formal name the longest of any State. And I'm trying to remember whether it's the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations? Pretty good. And it's a great pleasure to have the Governor as our lead witness today.

Governor, we welcome you and please proceed.

## TESTIMONY OF THE HON. DONALD L. CARCIERI,[1] GOVERNOR, STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

Governor CARCIERI. Thank you very much, Senator Collins, and welcome to the Ocean State. It is the Ocean State as you will keep hearing today. And thank you, Senator Chafee, for being here. The Senator and I had the pleasure on Tuesday of blowing up a bridge, and that will be memorable.

I am pleased to have the opportunity to testify before you today. In the wake of Hurricane Katrina, we all know how important it is for our State and all States to be fully prepared, not if, but when a hurricane strikes our State. Since 1851, Rhode Island has experienced nine direct hits. We've learned firsthand what can happen to our capital city when a hurricane strikes.

As you indicated, during the hurricane of 1938, the storm hit Rhode Island at high tide, flooding the Providence business district. Residents drowned, cars were submerged in seven feet of water, and buildings were damaged by the fury of the storm.

Sixteen years later, our capital city was flooded once again by the tidal waves from Hurricane Carol. Just like the hurricane of 1938, Carol arrived near high tide. I did not experience 1938, but I was 12 years old in 1954, and I remember it extraordinarily well. We lived near the water. My dad had a couple of boats. He shellfished summers. So I lived through and saw the devastation of Hurricane Carol. We went through it and saw it personally in the aftermath of that. So for me, this is a personal experience that I don't want to see duplicated. Southern Rhode Island, as you pointed out, had wind gusts of 115 to 135 miles per hour, and T.F. Green Airport sustained 90 miles per hour winds. Hurricane Carol took a great toll on southern Rhode Island. From Westerly to Newport, some 5,000 buildings were destroyed. In Westerly, it's estimated there were tides up to 13 feet above mean high water, and 600,000 Rhode Islanders lost power. The storm affected our capital city with water rising within a foot of the record line that you saw on the plaque commemorating the 1938 hurricane. So Hurricane Carol was a tough one, a stronger one, and had a huge impact on our State.

[1] The prepared statement of Governor Carcieri appears in the Appendix on page 31.

Particularly after the hurricanes in Florida 2 years ago, as I took office here, I directed the Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency to begin updating Rhode Island's hurricane plans. The lessons that we've learned through Hurricane Katrina have reinvigorated that process. Under the leadership of our new EMA Director, Bob Warren, and our new Adjutant General, General Bob Bray, we have been working hard and making major progress to make our plan the strongest and most effective in the Nation. In fact, the team from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security recently visited our State and praised those efforts. As I say, we are making major progress.

We are currently working with a consultant and have been for a few months now to assist us in developing a comprehensive hurricane evacuation plan. As was clear from Katrina and its impacts, it was an issue of evacuation, getting residents out of harm's way that would be affected by the storm surge. We paid a lot of attention to that. I allocated almost $20,000 out of my own contingency for purposes to make this plan and get it completed by June 1. It will give us a blueprint. I think you are going to see in subsequent testimony, we have got it up on the web site, and you will be quite impressed to see the actual evacuation plan and all the overlays in terms of Category 3 and 4 floodplains that we have outlined across the State. It will, as I said, give us a blueprint to follow, highlight the steps we need to take before, during, and after a hurricane. And our plan will address issues such as evacuation and resource management while the storm is still along the southeast coast line.

As part of our efforts to better prepare for a hurricane, I have asked all municipalities for a report documenting that local emergency plans are as comprehensive as possible, especially for people with disabilities. Last fall, I attended a hurricane preparedness meeting with Bob Warren and our State's Emergency Management Agency officials and local municipalities to ensure that all cities and towns have effective evacuation routes, as well as hurricane preparedness plans. We have already identified escape routes for the 21 coastal communities that might be inundated by flooding during a storm and have posted that information on the EMA web site.

We have also worked with the Red Cross to solve the shortage in evacuation shelters. In fact, we have about 15 now of a targeted 30 that we believe we will need to have available. All of the data in terms of percentages of people in the affected area who will require shelter, we are following that, and we're working very closely with the Red Cross. They actually have primary responsibility for identifying those shelters, and that is ongoing.

To make sure that our hurricane plan will ensure public safety to the utmost degree, the EMA has been developing a donations management plan, and we're working on partnering with the Salvation Army, the Red Cross, as I mentioned, and the Rhode Island Community Food Bank to receive those items.

The Rhode Island EMA has been working with the Department of Environmental Management to address the State's debris management plan. If a Category 3 hurricane would hit our State, it could generate as much waste as the State would normally produce in 3 years. We must have the capability to clear critical infrastruc-

ture and dispose of debris. Additionally, EMA has worked with FEMA to create a plan to distribute food, water, and ice to our citizens.

Since I took office, I have made it a priority to enhance Rhode Island's preparedness for hurricanes and emergencies of any kind. I have allocated $50,000 each year since I have been in office for ongoing support of the hurricane barrier. Our hurricane barrier, which was constructed after Hurricane Carol and after the capital city flooded twice, was tested in July before the Army Corps of Engineers, they oversee that, and it passed inspection.

Since fiscal year 2003, Rhode Island has received $41.5 million in homeland security grants. That is enabling us to move forward with a host of projects, including urban search and rescue, hazard teams, and casualty trailers to name just a few.

Currently, our State has requested nearly $60 million in homeland security grants. As you know, we are only guaranteed $7 million. We are very concerned about the new process. In order to continue the progress we are making in better preparing our State for a hurricane or a disaster, we must receive the funding that we need to protect the people of Rhode Island. As you pointed out, Senator Collins, we are a highly concentrated, densely populated State. We may be small in population, but we are all living closely together. I urge you to address this pressing issue so that we can build upon the momentum we have gained.

For example, we are making progress in facilitating communication among first responders. A major issue that has been identified around the country we saw in the case of our Station nightclub fire that Senator Chafee is well aware of. The ability of first responders to communicate with one another was significantly hampered.

We have enhanced the interoperability in Washington County, which is one of our southern communities' counties, and work is underway to bring this standardized communications system for first responders in Newport, North Providence, Providence, and South County. However, in order to complete this statewide system, our EMA is seeking $32 million in homeland security grants.

We also have Nextel radio systems in our hospitals and in every community in our State to enable first responders to communicate with emergency rooms. That got highlighted in the most recent review by homeland security personnel in terms of really being state-of-the-art, and we're well ahead of the curve there.

Last year, we dedicated a high tech $1.4 million mobile Command Center, which will enable us to set up a post anywhere in our State and allow Federal, State, and local agencies to communicate effectively during an emergency.

Two years ago, Burrillville, one of our northern smaller communities, and several surrounding communities pooled their resources from homeland security grants to also purchase a mobile command post. And due to the generosity of a local resident, the City of Newport has a mobile command post.

Additionally, Rhode Island E911 has implemented a pilot program that utilizes state-of-the-art technology which ables dispatchers to view a location from many different angles. This gives first responders all of the pertinent information before they get to a scene.

To have more cohesive emergency operations, I have recommended a $20 million bond to locate the Emergency Operations Center, E911, IT, and EMA at a single complex within the Pastore complex. The General Assembly has heard testimony on this issue and is considering the request. We also will be seeking $6 million from the Federal Government to make this a state-of-the-art facility.

I should say that, and I know you sponsored legislation that I am very supportive of, one of the things FEMA needs to look at is the ability of States to be proactive, particularly in terms of hurricane preparedness, and one of the issues I see is sort of what we call State active duty. In other words, getting our people in the emergency operations centers up and running well ahead, days ahead of the actual projected landfall. Right now, I think it is a reticence because it is State money; if it never comes, then it is an expenditure out of the State funds. From a Federal perspective, if our goal is to make all the shoreline communities more prepared, I think that would be an excellent thing if we could somehow, I know that requires a modification of the Stafford Act or whatever, build funding from the Federal standpoint to stand those emergency operation centers up in anticipation of and ahead of the projected landfall.

And it looks like I'm out of time.

Chairman COLLINS. Take as much time as you need, Governor.

Governor CARCIERI. Well, just a couple of last thoughts here.

Last week, my staff and I met with Senator Chafee, I think I mentioned it to you, Senator Collins, to discuss emergency response plans for the Port of Providence in the event a series of catastrophic events occurred. There is a group that does modeling and simulations in terms of cascading events in ports. And when we saw what happened with Hurricane Katrina, and what followed, by the flood, we need some money. We are seeking $1 million that will enable us to be better prepared for the type of chain reaction that we may experience in the port here. If we had an event, at the LNG tank, for example, that then cascaded into subsequent events at other places, we are also the home for the distribution of petroleum to the northeast. So it wouldn't just be a Rhode Island impact. In fact, it would be a knock-out impact in the region if we were to have cascading events here at the port.

One final point I would make is over the last 2 years, as far as I am concerned, we have made major progress. Our plan was substantially inadequate 2 years ago. We have made major progress. My goal is by June 1 at the beginning of the hurricane season to have that plan completed, all elements in place have been exercised, and I am confident that we are going to get to that point.

From the standpoint of working with FEMA, working with the Federal Government, working with the communities, the advantage we have as a small State is we can get together, and I think there's a very cohesive attitude about attacking this problem, and I am very confident that we are in good shape. We will be in much better shape by June 1. And you will hear from the General and Bob Warren a lot of details, but I think there are some things at the Federal level that you could do and that you have indicated in your legislation that I would be, as I said, very supportive of.

The notion that it is all based on population I just don't think applies in our State. Coastline communities often are not highly populated in that sense, but if we are talking about hurricanes, we need assistance, particularly in the area of being proactive. Because when I look at our response system, very often it is reactive, after the event, now you have mobilized all of the resources, and I think that may be true of a terrorist attack or something like that. But in hurricane preparedness, I think being proactive could be a key in terms of making sure that everybody is better prepared and ready to go.

So I will stop there because I know you have a bunch of questions. Thank you very much for the opportunity to appear before the two of you. And thank you again, Senator Collins, for coming.

Chairman COLLINS. Thank you very much, Governor. Your testimony was excellent, and I want to congratulate you on focusing on so many of the issues that our investigation into Hurricane Katrina has taught us are the key issues and make literally the difference between life and death in a disaster.

I was particularly interested to learn of the work you are doing on evacuations, and you have kindly provided us with the maps showing the routes and the plans that you have because that is really critical. What we learned in looking at Louisiana in particular is, although there were some evacuation plans, there was a delay in implementing them and in calling for a mandatory evacuation, but also there was a lack of familiarity with the plans. So I think the work that you are doing in advance of the involvement of the communities is completely the right way to go, and I commend you for that.

One part that we found was a weakness with Louisiana's plans is that their evacuation plans did not include a means to evacuate those who could not evacuate themselves, those without the means of transportation, those with special needs, those in nursing homes or hospitals. Is that an area that you are working on; and if so, if you could comment on that?

Governor CARCIERI. Yes. I think you are absolutely correct, Senator. I think all of us were a little appalled when we saw the people in nursing homes that were unable to evacuate themselves were left behind and not properly considered and they did not seem to have the mechanism to move them out. I think we all learned from that. As part of our plan, we are doing it. We have done an assessment, and we are waiting now for the completion to come up with all of the cities' and towns' residents that they are aware of, nursing homes, day care facilities, those kind of things where we know that those facilities exist; how many of them are there, where are they, and does the municipality have a plan for taking care of those and evacuating those personnel.

And that's a key element of all of this because, as you pointed out, as I indicated to you, we are a small State with 400 miles of coastline, and there are, in fact, homes and facilities with people that would need assistance in that floodplain area. So that is clearly a piece of the whole plan that will be well identified. And, hopefully, if any municipality is going to need any assistance with those evacuations, we are prepared to provide that assistance, as well. So it will vary from town to town, some might have one facility with

a few people, but we have also tried to ask them to go out a little further because often you have seniors that are in a home and are not prepared to evacuate themselves. In some cases, you rely on a community's knowledge of their neighborhoods and so forth.

So we are trying to reach out and get as much of that information as we can and make sure that, God forbid if we get hit, we know who we have to go in and help move out.

Chairman COLLINS. The second issue that you mentioned that we found was a critical deficiency in the response to Hurricane Katrina was the inability of first responders to communicate with one another. We learned in the attacks on our country on September 11 that lives were lost because police officers could not communicate with firefighters and firefighters could not communicate with emergency medical personnel. The same thing happened in Hurricane Katrina. And, in fact, our investigation revealed that just within the New Orleans area, there were multiple systems that were incompatible, and this, as you know, is referred to as the interoperability issue.

It sounds like you have made that a real priority but need some Federal funding to assist you in reaching the goal. Could you give the Committee a sense of how far along you are as a State in achieving the interoperability and how much, I think you said it was $32 million, that you have applied for.

Governor CARCIERI. Yes.

Chairman COLLINS. Whether you could continue to make the progress that you need to complete this or is Federal funding really essential?

Governor CARCIERI. I would say Federal funding is essential because it is the acquisition of the equipment that we need to do that as you pointed out.

I indicated one of our counties, Washington County, which is in the southern part of the State, a lot of coastline, we did a couple of years ago receive funding to make all those communities interoperable. We have a plan to bring it statewide. That is the $32 million that I referred to. I think it would be very difficult for us to do that without Federal assistance.

The other thing, I think a key piece of that in terms is the mobile command unit I talked about. That is a very effective tool where you've got situations where you don't have interoperability, where you've got different frequencies. We saw that, I saw that. We had a bad fire in Pawtucket, one of our own cities up here, and Massachusetts used theirs, and it was very effective, and they had people talking to one another. Now, that was all electronics. We have some of that capability, as I indicated, but I think to do this effectively, we need that Federal assistance.

And I agree with you completely, everything—my own personal experience, when we had that Station nightclub fire, was very consolidated, concise in that one building, which we had responders coming from multiple cities and towns nearby. We had rescue personnel, we had ambulances, and we had people using personal cell phones trying to communicate, and that is a theme I have heard in talking with fellow governors. The whole notion of responders being able to communicate on the same frequency is critical, I think, to the response.

So I would say that without Federal assistance there, I think it is going to be very difficult for a State like ours.

Chairman COLLINS. Thank you. Senator Chafee.

Senator CHAFEE. Thank you, again, Senator Collins. And, Governor, welcome, of course.

Senator Collins, when the Governor was running for office in 2002, he had a primary and then an election. So he was going 7 days a week pretty much all summer, all fall. Then when he got elected, he had to put together a government and hire his people. So he finally got a vacation in February. As soon as he got to Florida, he got a call that there was a most tragic fire back here in Rhode Island. So he got the first plane back and dealt with, as we just discussed a little bit here, the tragedy that was unfolding.

And, Governor, you talked a little bit what you have learned from that, but maybe just expand a little bit on, interoperability is certainly one issue, but how the first responders, what we learned from the Station fire and what improvements still need to be made. I know we had a very good response at that tragedy, but there's always room for improvement. Where in particular can we focus?

Governor CARCIERI. I think that you are right, Senator. We learned from those things. And one of the lessons early on was the whole communications, the responders being unable to coordinate. For instance, you had people still coming to the scene when the fire essentially was out. And we did not need fire support. What we needed was rescue support. We had communication problems, I think, with the hospitals because, as you recall, all of the—initially, many of the rescues were going to Kent County Hospital, one of our smaller regional hospitals, Senator Collins, and they had stood up all of that capacity; and the communication as to the flow, once all of the response was done and we had everybody accounted for, there was a real breakdown in communication in terms of letting them stand down now. We had accounted for everybody coming from the scene. So the whole communication, whether it is the first responders, the responders for the hospitals that are treating, is key.

Let me also say that from my perspective, my experience with the Federal response was outstanding in that we needed the DMORT team that came in here, Senator, and they were here in less than 24 hours with their mobile unit.

The whole team was here. We could not have done the job in the Medical Examiner's Office in terms of identifying those victims of that terrible tragedy and returning them to their families and the time frame in which we did it, which was 5 days essentially. We were going round the clock. And that would not have been possible without the expertise, without the resources of the Federal DEMORT team.

So my limited experience there in terms of the Federal response was outstanding. They were there. They came. They had all the resources. They were consummate professionals. I spent virtually every day going down to the medical examiner's offices to see how we were progressing, what issues there might be that needed to be dealt with, and they were outstanding from that perspective. So a very defined and specific requirement we had, but they made it

available, as I said, very expeditiously and with great professionalism.

Senator CHAFEE. That's all I have, Senator.

Chairman COLLINS. Thank you. Governor, thanks so much for being with us today for leading off this hearing. We look forward to working with you. I do want to say again that I am impressed with the work that you are doing to get ahead of the curve and to make sure that Rhode Island is as prepared as possible, whether it's for a natural disaster or an attack or any other catastrophe. And I very much appreciate your leadership, and we look forward to being your partners on the Federal level.

So thank you so much for coming this morning.

Governor CARCIERI. Thank you very much, Senator. I appreciate your support, both senators. The bill that you've got in, I think, recognizes the needs that are very different; you cannot just have one size fits everybody in this game. I want to assure you that from my perspective, you've got a great team here working very hard to do all the pieces in a very complex issue. Hurricane preparedness is very different than terrorist homeland security issues. We have both, and I think that we have tried to do, I think, the best job we can. I am very positive about the team we have built here, and so I am very confident we will be prepared. Thank you.

Chairman COLLINS. Thank you. I would now like to call forth our second panel of witnesses. This panel consists of five local, State, and Federal officials.

The first witness we are going to hear from on this panel is the Mayor of Providence, David Cicilline. He is a graduate of Brown University and Georgetown University Law Center. He is a former public defender, criminal defense and civil rights lawyer. He is also a former State Representative.

He will be followed by Robert Warren, the Executive Director of the Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency. Mr. Warren is a career firefighter, last serving as Chief of the Cranston Fire Department and the Director of the Cranston Emergency Management Agency before joining State government in 2005.

Mr. Horak is the Acting Regional Director of Region 1 of FEMA. That is New England. I would note that in response to the hurricane in the Gulf region last year, I noticed that FEMA immediately turned to New England for help. And I think that shows that when you are in trouble, you always know New Englanders have the ability to handle most anything. Mr. Horak joined the agency in 1983 as a disaster assistance employee and has held a variety of subsequent positions throughout the agency. His national disaster duty assignments have included Hurricane Andrew, the North Ridge earthquake, and 1993 Midwest floods.

Major General Robert Bray was appointed as the Adjutant General of the Rhode Island National Guard in February of this year. General Bray has more than 35 years of military and emergency management experience. I would also note that it is very unusual for an adjutant general in my experience to have first responder experience, and I understand that you were a former fire division chief in South Dakota of all places, but we are pleased to have you here.

Chief John Chartier is a 30-year veteran of the City of Warwick Fire Department. He presently serves as Chief of the department and as its Emergency Management Director.

I am very pleased to welcome you all here today. I think we have exactly the people that we need to assist us in getting a good understanding of the interaction among all the levels of government that are involved when a disaster strikes.

Mr. Mayor, we'll start with you.

**TESTIMONY OF THE HON. DAVID N. CICILLINE,[1] MAYOR, CITY OF PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND**

Mayor CICILLINE. Thank you very much, Madam Chairman, Senator Chafee. Welcome to Providence, Madam Chairman, and thank you for the opportunity to offer my testimony to this distinguished Committee.

On behalf of our city, I thank you for the Committee's efforts to protect our city, State, and Nation from the threats of terrorism and natural disasters. As our focus today underscores, recent events have taught us that we do not have the luxury of preparing for terrorist attacks at the expense of being ready for natural disasters. Both threats are imminent and share equal priority. In fact, with a terrorist incident in our region, it's a matter of if it will happen. With a natural disaster like a major hurricane, it's only a matter of when it will happen.

In Providence, we know exactly what a devastating hurricane can do to our city. If you walk straight out of this building, I think as you have, about 100 yards to the Amica Building at 10 Weybosset Street, you can reach up 8 feet to a brass plaque that shows how high the water rose during the hurricane in 1938, unlike the Governor, long before I was born. And several inches under that is another plaque showing the waterline from Hurricane Carol in 1954. The hurricane of 1938 cost about $300 million in pre-World War II dollars. Needless to say, if that kind of flooding were to happen in Providence again, the costs would be enormous.

Two hundred eighty acres that make up the economic engine of the State of Rhode Island and the southern New England region would be drowned.

Hundreds of businesses, thousands of jobs, hundreds of residential condominiums and apartments, the region's transportation hub, the seat of city government, our Federal and State courthouses, State offices, the region's major newspaper, dozens of facilities from four universities, our city's power, sewer and water systems, all of these would be crippled.

Fortunately, something now stands in the way of a major hurricane, and that kind of devastation in Providence, and that is our hurricane barrier. As you know, southern New England has a wealth of precious assets; but when you consider what it protects, our hurricane barrier may be one of the most valuable. I am pleased to report that with a tremendous amount of support from Senator Chafee, we have invested a great deal in recent years to bolster the hurricane barrier. Over the last several years, over $2 million has been invested to upgrade this facility. Most of that has

[1] The prepared statement of Mayor Cicilline appears in the Appendix on page 38.

been made possible through Federal funds, but our local Providence taxpayers have also shared most of the burden, and the facility is maintained by our very own city Department of Public Works.

We are confident the hurricane barrier can withstand up to a Category 4 storm surge, which would be 18 feet above median water levels, but there is still more we need to do in order to fully bring it up to date according to the experts who have done examinations. The major upgrade required is to the electrical system, but a variety of smaller fixes should be made as well.

When the hurricane barrier was first constructed, it was envisioned as a local protection project, but its vital function has clearly outgrown this definition. While we are confident in our hurricane barrier, it is only responsible that we are prepared for a breach or for some other kind of unforeseen natural disaster.

There are several other areas which our emergency response plans need the kind of fortification that can only be provided at the Federal level. Some of the FEMA maps that we rely on to estimate coastal flooding hazards are over 20 years old, and new development has altered watersheds and floodplains.

We strongly support your honorable colleague Senator Reed's National Flood Mapping Act that would require an update of these maps. It would also require FEMA maps also be based on the best, most up-to-date data.

We need funding to support the re-engineering of roadways used as evacuation routes that better support high volume traffic and create extra large breakdown lanes to aid traffic flow.

While we have a plan for emergency shelters in the City of Providence, the cost of maintaining them over a number of days or weeks is prohibitive for a municipality. We need support to cover costs such as the purchase of generators, construction of bathrooms and showers, and larger cooking facilities.

Training is another important need. A plan is only as good as its ability to be executed as we have seen time and time again and has also been pointed out by our Lieutenant Governor. The time and expertise required of good training is a necessary investment, but it is also expensive. As with all good investments, I believe in the long run it would be cheaper to do these things than to not do them.

Finally, I would be remiss if I did not take the opportunity to emphasize how effective the Rhode Island Federal delegation has been in making sure our region is as prepared as possible. We recently received important support for our Emergency Operations Center, our interoperable communications capabilities are being upgraded as we speak. And I particularly want to thank you again, Senator Chafee, for your focused attention for our hurricane barrier. Our region is safer thanks to the hard work of you and your staff.

Madam Chairman, Senator Chafee, I am extremely grateful to have the opportunity to submit this testimony to this honorable Committee. Thank you.

Chairman COLLINS. Thank you, Mr. Mayor. Mr. Warren.

**TESTIMONY OF ROBERT J. WARREN,[1] EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, RHODE ISLAND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY**

Mr. WARREN. Good morning, Madam Chairman. Good morning, Senator Chafee. Thank you for this invitation to speak before you this morning.

The Governor has addressed and General Bray will also address many of the initiatives that have been and are ongoing within the State. As the Executive Director of the Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency, I am in contact with local and Federal partners that the State interacts with on a daily basis. As such, my remarks today will address not only the issues that affect Rhode Island, but also those that I feel are important to maintain the unique relationship we enjoy with those partners.

Being the Ocean State, all Rhode Islanders recognize the value of Narragansett Bay. This resource is one of my biggest concerns. The population that now lives or earns a living from the bay has increased tremendously in recent years. Yet our latest inundation studies of the bay were done in 1993. While we are working now to modernize these matters with grants from FEMA and other agencies, Congress must give the Army Corps of Engineers and the other agencies which perform these studies the appropriate level of funding to maintain the effectiveness of these programs. Responders and, more importantly, our municipal planners cannot accurately predict or prevent damage without current and up-to-date data. Funding for these programs will help prevent future disasters. Congress must make every effort to maintain these programs even though the benefit may seem to be years in the future.

The past 6 months have been the most active that I can remember in my public safety emergency management career. The lessons learned from Hurricane Katrina have caused us to reexamine our assumptions and our priorities. Plans and programs in place today would not be successful without our Federal and local partners. The amount of planning and program requirements flowing down from the Federal level is placing a strain on our planning capabilities. As important as planning for hurricanes is, none of us can forget that other dangers still exist; terrorism, pandemic flu, and our own local hazards from industry and such cannot be ignored.

My agency is now getting planning, exercise, and training guidelines and deadlines for program development from many Federal agencies, including Homeland Security, FEMA, National Guard, Center for Disease Control, and the NRC, with what seems like little coordination or recognition of our resources. Most of my staff is working on several plans simultaneously with conflicting deadlines and schedules. Only two communities in the State have full time emergency management staff. Most are either part time or do the work as collateral duty such as Chief Chartier.

I ask that you take this back to Washington on behalf of RIEMA and that of our partners who are making every effort to meet the demands that I place on them to assist us in coordinating a plan for these disasters. This issue was also raised at the FEMA Regions 1 and 2 conference last week in Albany by the State directors of the New England emergency management agencies. A recent ex-

[1] The prepared statement of Mr. Warren appears in the Appendix on page 40.

ample would be the DHS regional hurricane drill, which was planned for the same time as our regional conference with Canada is set up. Now, this did eventually get changed on behalf of Cristine McCooms from Massachusetts and Director Horak from Region 1, but, again, a lot of e-mails, a lot of time spent just trying to make sure we can all meet at the time the Federal partners want to meet. So that's one of my issues.

My last remarks do not mean to imply that we do not have a high level of cooperation with our Federal partners. FEMA Region 1 has been more than helpful during my tenure at RIEMA. FEMA had a representative located in our State EOC during the entire week we were planning to receive evacuees from New Orleans and during the flooding that we experienced in October. We are using FEMA staff to help rewrite our resource management plan, and our three military emergency preparedness liaison officers have been active in the EOC during that plan and before the flooding. So I feel we get a high level of cooperation between Boston and Rhode Island.

I truly believe that should Rhode Island face an event the magnitude of Hurricane Katrina, our relationship and communications with the various Federal agencies will be an asset, not a hindrance.

Another issue that I feel needs to be addressed is the use of homeland security funds for multiple disciplines. DHS guidelines in the past have told us what the funds can be used for in any given year. I think this evaluation needs to be expanded to include areas such as natural hazards or other hazards. For example, one request I continually receive from local government is to use DHS funds for generators for public shelters. This has not been allowed in the past. Local directors feel that this is the most basic way to protect their citizens. These types of expenses need to be allowed by grant guidelines. The response to Katrina was the largest involving mutual aid in our history, and we need to examine the ways to make this response more efficient and easier for the responding States and local communities. The Emergency Management Aid Compact was used with great success in the last two hurricane seasons. EMAC is a State, not a Federal asset. But in all practicality, the system is funded through the Stafford Act so it goes into effect quickly during these events. I feel that Congress should take interest in this valuable aid system. The best way at this point would be to make it easier and quicker for the payment to the responding communities. It is not my intent to lead you to believe the system in place does not work or that it is totally a Federal issue. It just seems that the paperwork between communities and States and then the Federal Government leaves the local response communities or States using their own funds for a longer period of time. As we look at more national mutual aid in the future, I feel this area needs to be examined further and have more innovation.

One specific request that I do have for you today is some direct funding for Rhode Island in building our Emergency Management Center. The Governor has placed before the legislature a request for $20 million to rehab a State owned facility that I will share with E911, DoIT, and RIEMA. If the Federal Government could contribute another $6 million specifically earmarked for EOC, that would be a great help to my staff. What we have planned now,

while it may be adequate, is not what I think we will need in the future. And I think that if the Federal Government continues to hope or insist that the locals coordinate with the Federal Government, especially in a regional event, some assistance in giving us the proper tools would be greatly appreciated.

Thank you for allowing me to appear before you today.

Chairman COLLINS. Thank you, Mr. Warren. Mr. Horak.

**TESTIMONY OF KENNETH L. HORAK,[1] ACTING REGIONAL DIRECTOR, REGION 1, FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY**

Mr. HORAK. Good morning, Madam Chairman, Senator Chafee.

My name is Kenneth Horak. As stated, I am the Acting Regional Director of FEMA Region 1. I will discuss today FEMA's role and activities in emergency planning in Rhode Island and the specific activities associated with preparing for the 2006 hurricane season.

As was noted, hurricanes are no stranger to Rhode Island including the hurricane of 1938, Hurricane Carol, which I do remember as well as the Governor, I was roughly his age at the time, but Hurricane Bob is the most recent example of the vulnerability of Rhode Island to hurricanes, and I was involved in the Hurricane Bob response.

The historic 2005 hurricane season challenged FEMA as never before. While Hurricane Katrina resulted in a record response from all levels of government, the lessons learned from FEMA's response have proved invaluable for the improvement of future major disaster responses.

The State of Rhode Island responded in many ways, too, and we are particularly grateful to the State for providing housing and essential State and community services to over 200 evacuees from the devastated Gulf region under a Presidential Emergency Declaration. I want to particularly thank Governor Carcieri for his leadership in playing a significant role in what was truly a national response to Hurricane Katrina.

Given the geographic relationship of our six New England States, FEMA Region 1 sponsors a regional approach to disaster plans and response. In that context, FEMA Region 1 conducted Operation Yankee, a regional preparedness exercise hosted by Rhode Island at the Naval War College in 2003. This 2-day event attracted over 200 participants representing emergency management, law enforcement, health, medical, volunteer, and emergency services from throughout the region.

We work closely with the Northeast States Emergency Consortium (NESEC), a not for profit, all hazard mitigation, emergency management mitigation organization consisting of the Emergency Management Directors from the FEMA Regions 1 and 2. NESEC is the only multi-hazard group consortium of its kind in the country. We chair the quarterly Regional Interagency Steering Committee (RISC) meetings, attended by Federal Emergency Support Function agencies and State emergency management representatives. The most recent meeting in March focused on lessons learned from Hurricane Katrina. Our operations staff meet regularly with

[1] The prepared statement of Mr. Horak appears in the Appendix on page 44.

the State operations officers to coordinate specific plans related to a wide range of topics, such as energy, communications, and transportation. A FEMA Region 1 technical specialist is currently in Rhode Island working to assist the State with their commodity distribution plan, at the request of the RIEMA director.

We conduct monthly conference calls with the State Emergency Management Directors and staff. With our State Emergency Management Directors, we participate in two annual International Emergency Management Group (IEMG) meetings with Canada to review Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for cross border emergency access. We are currently participating in national and regional meetings and exercises in advance of the hurricane season. Current examples include the FEMA/Army Corps of Engineers Senior Leadership Seminar; Emergency Response Team National (ERIN) workshops; the Joint Region 1 and 2 Catastrophic Planning Conference, as Director Warren alluded to, with the State Emergency Management Directors from both of the regions; meetings with Rhode Island Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters (VOAD); and we will participate with our States in a regional tabletop exercise along the east and Gulf Coast States planned by the Office of Grants and Training in the DHS Preparedness Directorate.

We work with NOAA, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, particularly the National Service Weather Office in Taunton to coordinate hurricane preparedness.

We anticipate the imminent designation by Secretary Chertoff of a Principal Federal Official and a Federal Coordinating Officer for our region for this upcoming hurricane season. Once those individuals are named, we will hold a meeting with our partners in the New England States to review the 2006 Hurricane Season Concept of Operations, ensuring coordination, unity of command in adherence hearings with the principals of the Incident Command System.

We are planning to present a briefing on our operational readiness for the staff of congressional delegation district offices. We expect soon that the Defense Coordinating Officer, Colonel Francis Kosich, and support staff will be stationed at FEMA Region 1 to expediate the position of Department of Defense support team. Colonel Ostead has already met with regional staff and will play a significant role in the upcoming tabletop exercise.

The Region 1 IT staff coordinates with the New England States on issues of communications interoperability with emphasis on coordinating the supportive capability of any operations situation, including types of equipment frequency management.

We will follow existing protocols in responding to a hurricane or any other incident requiring Federal assistance. Those protocols include the activation of our Regional Response Coordination Center located with our Mobile Emergency Response Support detachment in Maynard, Massachusetts, deployment of the State Liaison Officer to the State EOC, and, in the case of an approaching hurricane, that State Liaison Officer will begin pre-landfall coordination with State officials in relaying information.

We will also deploy our Regional Hurricane Team liaison member to the National Hurricane Center for on scene situational

awareness. I should note that the State Liaison Officer for FEMA in the State of Rhode Island is a Rhode Island resident and served in that capacity for over 21 years. He knows the State very well.

We are currently increasing our workforce for disaster readiness. Our staff is currently providing new disaster generalist training for approximately 360 recently hired Disaster Assistance Employees for New England, New York, and New Jersey. Through FEMA's online independent study program, Rhode Islanders have taken over 3,000 emergency management courses this last year. In addition, two members of RIEMA's staff have completed the Hurricane Readiness Training Workshop.

On the national level, FEMA has created two incident response support teams to support the Federal response. When first needed, these rapidly deployable teams will provide on site support to State, local, and tribal governments on technical assistance, situational awareness, communications, and assistance in requesting and employing life sustaining Federal assets.

In a network of logistic centers around the country, FEMA has obtained and stored commodities, Meals Ready to Eat (MREs), ice, water, generators, cots, blankets, and mats. Last month, FEMA made arrangements to procure and deliver needed items more quickly in the future. We are working on Total Asset Visibility to track commodities at all times.

We are strengthing our emergency medical response. One of the Nation's first 10 Disaster Medical Assistance Teams (DMATs) is Rhode Island (DMAT 1). This team has responded to many incidents, including the Asian flu, influenza outbreak in the southeast in 2004, the Station nightclub fire in West Warwick in 2003, the World Trade Center attacks in 2001, and the Egypt Air crash in 1999.

FEMA is improving customer service and expediting help to disaster victims by doubling registration capacity to 200,000 persons per day. We will also deploy mobile registration intake centers, recognizing that many disaster victims may be stranded in shelters with no communications to register for disaster assistance. We are expanding our home inspection and verification processes to improve the speed and suitability of temporary housing operations.

Finally, as Federal, State, local, and tribal governments become better prepared in anticipation of this hurricane season, it is vitally important that individuals and families also be prepared. New England has not had a significant hurricane in many years, potentially resulting in the lack of individual preparedness. The States generally hold public awareness campaigns at the start of the hurricane season. FEMA Region 1 public affairs staff will support the States' efforts to promote citizen preparedness through the U.S. Department of Homeland Security Ready plan.

Of course, preparation for improved emergency management must be a consistent process. FEMA will continue to make other significant enhancements beyond this hurricane season to help further strengthen the Nation's preparedness and ability to respond and recover from disasters, whatever the cost. We will look forward to continuing our partnership with the State of Rhode Island, local governments as well as the private sector, community organizations, and individuals in identifying their roles and responsibilities.

Together we will strengthen our ability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, and recover from catastrophic events.

Thank you very much.

Chairman COLLINS. Thank you. General Bray.

**TESTIMONY OF MAJOR GENERAL ROBERT THOMAS BRAY,[1] ADJUTANT GENERAL, RHODE ISLAND NATIONAL GUARD**

General BRAY. Good morning, Senator Collins and Senator Chafee. Thank you for this opportunity to testify this morning.

In addition to our Federal responsibilities, the business of the Rhode Island National Guard Emergency Management Agency is the safety and the security of the citizens of Rhode Island. It's a dynamic process that we are engaged in, and I'd like to highlight just a few of our accomplishments in that process.

We are currently working with the vendors to write a hurricane response plan which will begin to become an annex to the State's emergency operations plan. The plan will use a phase time line format. Actions will commence many hours before a storm is predicted to make landfall, will continue during a storm, and will conclude after the mitigation and restoration process. This format will give the Governor and myself ample time to make decisions well before the storm is predicted to make landfall. Our plan will address issues such as evacuation and resource management while the storm is still along the southeastern coastline. We feel that these proactive steps will reduce the exposure of our residents and guests to the effects of this storm and allow for a shorter recovery time.

As part of the research for this plan, contact was made with each of the 39 municipalities in the State to determine their potential, particularly during this type of event. We have also asked them to research and identify any special population groups residing in their community and inform the Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency of any requirements for evacuation above local resources.

As part of this planning process, we're working to strengthen the State's emergency support function in supportive plans which will ensure that the overall hurricane plan for Rhode Island will be sufficient in ensuring public safety.

The first associated plan which is in development is a donations management plan. We have hired a contractor using Federal funds to ensure we handle this critical function. Our plan is to use nongovernment organizations, such as the Salvation Army, the Red Cross, and the Rhode Island Food Bank, to receive these items. Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency has been meeting with these organizations over the past month to formalize how this will be accomplished. This part of our plan is also going to use volunteer organizations active in disasters to also help with this function and manage any spontaneous volunteers that may offer to help.

The last part of this area is activation of a citizen program. This Federal program has been inactive in Rhode Island. Through the past winter, we developed a template in conjunction with the local

[1] The prepared statement of General Bray with attachments appears in the Appendix on page 53.

chapter of the Red Cross to formalize and use this group of citizens to help guide us with the public concerns regarding homeland security. In this regard, our domestic preparedness committee has also created a special population subcommittee, consisting of people who represent these groups. These citizens give us a better insight into the actual issues and concerns specific to citizen space.

In conjunction with the Department of Environmental Management, the Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency has worked to rewrite the State's debris management plan. This is a daunting task. Projections for a Category 3 hurricane indicate a storm of that magnitude could generate as much waste as the State normally generates in 3 years. The State's ability to clear critical infrastructure and debris and dispose of this waste will be critical and will require a full management team with the cooperation of several State agencies.

We have also partnered with FEMA to generate the first ever resource management plan for Rhode Island. Using FEMA and the Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency staff, we have written a plan to distribute food, water, and ice to our population. Rhode Island intends to use FEMA's single point ordering system so that there is seamless ordering. And thanks to Ken Horak, the acting director of FEMA Region 1, for his foresight in working with us in this effort.

The lessons of Hurricane Katrina show the value of good intracommunications during an emergency. Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency runs a working group consisting of local, State, and private groups to complete this process for Rhode Island. We are spending large sums of money to ensure that Rhode Island has a statewide interoperable radio system. The Federal Government must continue to assist us in this endeavor. The cost of these systems is simply too much for the local communities to bear. We are also working with the local ham radio clubs and the amateur radio emergency services to establish ham communications between the State's Emergency Operations Center, local communities, and Red Cross shelters. This backup arrangement will give us tertiary systems. Rhode Island Emergency Management has already purchased new antennas and emergency power generators to address this concern.

In an endeavor to enhance our management and mitigation capabilities, the State has purchased Web EOC, an electronic management program which will increase the capabilities of our State Emergency Operations Center. The Emergency Management Agency has also purchased a computer for each local emergency manager. We have licensed them to operate on this system. After the training session scheduled in May, these computers will be issued to the local communities. This purchase is part of a well thought out plan to increase the flow of information using the same format and terminology between agencies. As stated earlier, we will adopt a single point ordering system. A local director, using Web EOC, will be capable of ordering relief supplies such as food, water, and ice from FEMA through the State Emergency Operations Center. This system will eliminate miscommunication, which in the past has hampered State disaster management.

Finally, the Rhode Island National Guard has been postured in a State of readiness since the attacks of September 11, 2001. In 24 hours, 7 days a week, the Joint Operation Center is maintained at the Command Readiness Center in Cranston. The Joint Operation Center monitors State, national, military, civilian communication pertaining to homeland security, national disaster conditions, and military operations. The Joint Operation Center is able to communicate interagency, multi-jurisdiction, and multi-agency. The Joint Operation Center is able to contact the chain of command of the Rhode Island State area command 24/7.

In addition, I would highlight the comments of the Governor pertaining to the Stafford Act and our ability to preempt a disaster event. It is critical that we are able to be proactive in this regard, so I again ask for your support in that particular area.

Once again, I would like to thank you for this opportunity to address this august assembly. Rhode Island continues to improve its capabilities to ensure public safety in the event of any manmade or national disaster. Preparedness is a task that we never relax on. Thank you.

Chairman COLLINS. Thank you, General. Chief Chartier.

**TESTIMONY OF JOHN E. CHARTIER,[1] FIRE CHIEF AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DIRECTOR, CITY OF WARWICK, RHODE ISLAND**

Chief CHARTIER. Good morning, Senators. First of all, I would like to thank you for your work in support of all first responders involved in both homeland security and emergency management and for allowing me the opportunity to meet with you this morning. I would like to address a few issues that I believe have relevance; in particular, the first responders here in Rhody.

As we approach the 2006 hurricane season, we do so with a renewed sense of commitment and urgency. I just returned from the National Hurricane Conference in Orlando, during which I had the opportunity to gain valued information on hurricane response and preparedness. The lessons learned from our colleagues in Florida and the Gulf States must be learned and changes made in order that we can all respond in a coordinated manner to effectively serve our citizens. We at the local level understand that local and county governments must take the lead in emergency response. Local government must be prepared to work through our State agencies with FEMA in coordinating the Federal Government's role in order that this approach is conducted in a team fashion. In order for this to happen, all parties must understand the chain of command for all responders in response to natural disasters.

During my training at the National Hurricane Conference, it became quite apparent that from region to region around the country, this chain of command is not consistent. While most agencies have adopted the National Incident Management System to conduct operations during emergency management and disaster response, the chain of command varies greatly by region. I feel that national protocols need to be developed and adopted and trained on in order that all regions conduct operations in a similar manner. By doing

[1] The prepared statement of Chief Chartier appears in the Appendix on page 63.

so, it will allow a greater understanding between operating agencies as to where they fit into the process, particularly when Federal agencies and assets are deployed in support of local operations.

With regard to communications, and this has been mentioned by many of my colleagues prior, particularly the Governor, it is my understanding that FEMA's National Response Coordination Center is upgrading its equipment and installing software to improve the interface, coordination, and the exchange of information with the Department of Homeland Security Operations Center. These improvements in information centers will improve coordination, rapid exchange of information, and access to field reports to locals before, during, and after a disaster, and this is sorely needed. However, while these changes are taking place at the Federal level, those of us at the local level are still struggling with a dire need for interoperable communications. Interoperable communications capabilities must be developed at the local level in order that emergency response officials can effectively communicate during a disaster. This type of communications system is extremely costly and for any local municipality to develop it on its own is almost beyond our means. I would strongly ask you to support the Governor's initiative to support funding for an interoperable radio communication system here in Rhode Island. As demonstrated during the recent Hurricane Katrina events, effective communication is vital. It is completely essential to a successful operation in this type of a situation.

With regard to Emergency Operations Centers, they are essential for the effective response of any community to a disaster in its ability to staff, operate, and maintain an adequate Emergency Operations Center. I would ask Congress to support funding designed to allow every region to develop a center that meets the needs of the area. In Warwick, my hometown, we are presently working on improvements in this area, but more Federal support is needed if we are to truly build an asset that meets the needs of the region.

These centers need to be established in a manner that is consistent with the chain of command I mentioned earlier.

I believe that FEMA in conjunction with our State counterparts should review present centers to ensure that they meet regional needs. While attending last week's conference, it became quite apparent to me that the southern States have developed these centers to a much greater level of capability than we have in the northeast. I'm sure much of the progress that they have made down there has unfortunately been driven by the frequency of hurricanes in recent years, but we must adopt and maintain similar facilities in all areas of the country if we are to be truly prepared.

With regard to shelter and supply at the local level, we have been working hard in developing adequate shelters for our community. This effort has been successful with the cooperation of the Red Cross and our local CERT teams. However, a concern to us is the ability to replenish and restock essential disaster commodities, such as food, water, and ice during a hurricane aftermath. It is extremely important that Congress support FEMA's efforts to maintain a ready supply of commodities and assets and develop surge capacity that would take us beyond the local needs and capacity to handle that.

With regard to FEMA and Homeland Security, those of us at the local level have seen the focus for available funding for emergency management and response shift to terrorism and weapons of mass destruction since September 11. For example, during the last couple of years, we have seen tremendous DHS support in terms of our hazardous materials and decontamination teams while other areas have received considerably less funding. While attention to issues involving terrorism is vitally important and necessary, it must be noted that we should be giving equal funding support to issues involving hurricane and natural disaster preparedness and response as well.

During the course of last week's conference, there was considerable discussion regarding the inclusion of FEMA under the Department of Homeland Security. I believe that Congress should give this issue careful consideration and ensure that if FEMA continues to remain part of DHS, that it does not become lost within that organization; that its ability to maintain focus and complete its mission in response to disasters efficiently is assured.

One last thing with regard to reimbursement. The response to Hurricane Katrina involved mutual aid from all parts of the country. We here in Rhode Island did our part as well and sent numerous folks and teams to that area. The Emergency Management Aid Compact allowed for efficient deployment of local and State assets with great success. Although these deployments were successful in completion of the mission, many of them were nightmares for locals like myself who funded these responses after assurances from State and Federal agencies that reimbursement would be forthcoming only to wait several months for compensation. When you are trying to balance a local budget, that makes things difficult. If Congress could simply streamline the process for reimbursement, it would allow greater support of missions in the future.

In conclusion, the role of local government in hurricane response and preparedness must be clearly defined and integrated into any State or Federal response. I believe that in Rhode Island, we are moving greatly in that direction. Particularly during the last 4 years, those of us at the local level have seen a tremendous commitment of our State government to support the locals not only in terrorism, weapons of mass destruction, but emergency management as well.

I would like to thank you for the opportunity to appear here this morning, and I would be happy to answer any questions you have.

Chairman COLLINS. Thank you so much, Chief, and thank you for sharing with us the results of the hurricane conference that you just attended.

Mr. Mayor, I want to start my questions with you. During the investigation of Hurricane Katrina, I was struck by, first of all, how critical the levees were and that the levees' failure greatly exacerbated the disaster; but, second, that there was confusion among local, State, and Federal officials as to who was responsible for maintaining the levees and responding to the breach when the levees began to fail. We actually had a hearing on the levees in which we had before us representatives of the New Orleans Levee Board, representatives of the State of Louisiana's Department of Transportation, and representatives of the Army Corps of Engi-

neers. And when I asked each of the witnesses who was responsible, each pointed to the other.

Now, here in Providence, I have learned that you have a critical hurricane barrier, the Fox Point barrier across the Providence River, and that project, which was completed, I believe, in the mid 1960s, is critical to protecting Providence from extensive flooding.

In your judgment, is it clear who is responsible for routine maintenance of the barrier and who would be responsible if the barrier were to fail during a hurricane?

Mayor CICILLINE. Yes. The hurricane barrier is maintained by the City of Providence. It is clear to me who's responsible for its maintenance. The Senator has been especially helpful in attracting Federal resources to do major capital upgrades. And one of the real issues is who should be responsible for maintaining it. The burden has been principally borne by the taxpayers, the local property taxpayers in the City of Providence, which is really an unfair distribution of that responsibility. That is a barrier that provides protection for the downtown region, which is really the economic, educational, political center of the State and has enormous economic development that has enormous consequences for the State, not just the city, and the region.

So the maintenance is provided by the City of Providence and the daily maintenance is done by city employees. The Army Corps of Engineers does regular inspection of the hurricane barrier and its pumps and its electrical systems. We have been very fortunate because we work with our Federal delegation, particularly Senator Chafee, to attract Federal resources to do some of that work. We need additional resources, but I think a larger question really is who is the right agency to ultimately have responsibility for that. In the sort of times in which we live, with the current configuration of Rhode Island and what that barrier protects, I think it is clear that the real responsibility ought to be the Federal Government, Army Corps of Engineers, who have both the capacity and the expertise and who play a critical role already, but have the resources of the Federal Government to both maintain and also to respond to a breach. If, in fact, there were a breach that required additional systems, we have a very strong partnership with our State emergency management officials, and we would, I'm certain, avail ourselves of that, as well as Federal assistance.

But I think today it does provide an opportunity to think about a larger and a more proactive response to that question to say, really, does it make sense to have local taxpayers of one city support the maintenance and the integrity of that very important barrier which protects our whole region.

Chairman COLLINS. I think that is an excellent point. It is a heavy burden for the taxpayers of one city to bear, given the importance of the barrier to the entire State and, as you point out, really, the region. But it is good to know that you don't have the confusion over basic responsibility that we saw in New Orleans because that was a major problem.

Mr. Warren, I was very pleased to hear Mr. Horak say that the Department of Homeland Security is moving to designating in advance a principal Federal official and a defense coordinating officer who will work together.

But I want to ask you, because I heard you say that you have been, I think, in your position for 10 years, whether there have been large scale exercises involving State, local, and Federal officials to actually train for a major hurricane or other natural disaster?

Mr. WARREN. Yes, there have been. In the past, we have done hurricane drills. Actually, 3 years ago, didn't we? The hurricane tracts you have before you came up the coast, and it was a 2-day exercise that went all through the States. We started a few days ahead of time listening to what was going on in South Carolina and such and those things. So we have done those.

Obviously, in the last couple of years, we have done a lot of training, most of it terrorist based. We have done a lot on the airport with our Federal partners. But, again, that does benefit us in a natural disaster. So I think the lines of communications are tested in those, also.

Chairman COLLINS. I think training and exercises are just critical.

I would ask Mr. Horak, do those exercises also involve key players from the nonprofit sector, such as the Red Cross, and for profit entities, such as power companies, for example?

Mr. HORAK. In the past, the for profits have not been involved, but the trend is in the right direction; TOPOFF III involved the private sector organizations. We have historically had the Red Cross as part of our emergency support functions as being first in the Federal Response Plan, and now in the National Response Plan. But, yes, there is a trend to involve the private sector more and more.

Chairman COLLINS. Good. Mr. Horak, you heard the Chief explain how difficult it is for a community to not receive prompt reimbursement when they answer the call for help under the Emergency Management Compact. Can you shed any light on why it takes so long to get reimbursement when first responders answer the call and go and help as occurred with Hurricane Katrina? That's a real disincentive for smaller communities to participate if it's going to wreak havoc on their budgets.

Mr. HORAK. Yes. And I personally recognize that, and I've seen that situation firsthand, but that is something that our headquarter's folks realize they have to improve on. We have to improve the financial management processes within FEMA. I think that is recognized by Director Paulison. That is a major priority for us.

Chairman COLLINS. Senator Chafee.

Senator CHAFEE. Thank you, Senator Collins.

Chief Chartier, we were talking to the Governor about the lessons from Hurricane Katrina of evacuating disabled nursing home patients, and the Governor was saying a lot of that responsibility has to go to the local level, and you, yourself, said the local level is going to have responsibility for much of the disaster.

In your experience in Warwick, do you have a good database of who is disabled in low lying areas and what nursing homes, just out of curiosity, in your home community? Are you prepared to know who might need help?

Chief CHARTIER. Yes, Senator. As part of our local emergency operations plan, we have identified all of our, what we have consid-

ered to be, vulnerable facilities, nursing homes, hospitals, and the like, particularly housing for the elderly. We have a couple that are built in low lying areas along the Pawtuxet River. In addition to that, we use our human resource folks in the City of Warwick to help maintain a database of folks that might be disabled or just simply not have the means to evacuate in a timely fashion, and we hope that by maintaining those lists and being aware of what structures we need to take care of on a priority basis that we can take care of that.

Senator CHAFEE. So you can say with some confidence you pretty much know who is wheelchair bound in various houses throughout the city?

Chief CHARTIER. Yes. We try to keep that information as current as possible. One of the downsides of any database is it is only as good as its recent update. And as people move, if they don't forward us their new information, then we have old data, but we do make a concerted effort to keep that as up to date as possible.

Senator CHAFEE. I have a question for the whole panel, I don't know who has the best answer, but the whole question of interoperability. Is it more a question of cost or developing technology? What is the big barrier to this concept and need for interoperability?

Mayor CICILLINE. It is clearly cost. We have the technology, and we actually are very far ahead in the City of Providence from many other communities as a result of Federal assistance. We are about 90 percent completed in interoperability, but that is unusual.

The U.S. Conference of Mayors actually recently did an analysis, and it is a huge problem across the country. It is really because local communities don't have the resources that they need to do this successfully to complete this process. There's wonderful technology, great systems, but these cost.

Senator CHAFEE. Anybody else want to respond?

General BRAY. If I might add to that, as we have stated, our 800 Megahertz communications system is a critical link to interoperability, but communications is just one dynamic of that command and control process, which will be assisted by the Web EOC software, and communications is another major part of that.

Redundant systems are essential, and we have done a lot in the State of Rhode Island to assure that we have redundant systems and capabilities such as, for example, our military communications systems that are a part of our organizations and, as well, capabilities of the 281st communications squadron, which is one of two assets in the entire United States that can replicate the backbone of both voice and digital communications.

So we are well postured at this time, but the critical issue is the final funding pieces to complete the 800 megahertz system.

Senator CHAFEE. And I think it was Mr. Horak who mentioned in preparation for a hurricane, one of the needs is tarps. And as we flew into New Orleans even months after the hurricane, it seemed like every roof had a blue tarp over it. So certainly small things such as that are important. Once the storm has passed and those shingles have blown off, protecting what has survived is very important. A good supply of tarps makes a big difference.

Chief Chartier mentioned chain of command, and is there anything specific we can do on the Committee to push these national standards that you are advocating for?

Chief CHARTIER. I think many of the standards are already there. I think what needs to be done is more training exercises that involve the locals right up through the FEMA level.

One of the things that I heard from my colleagues sitting around at night after the conference was over and talking about lessons that they had learned was when the Federal Government comes in and interacts, many times folks at the local level are not completely clear where the Federal Government fits into the process, and those chains of command and the layers of responsibility have to be clearly identified and everyone has to understand that before the incident happens. Because it gets back to what Senator Collins was talking about, who is in charge of the levee, who's responsibility it is. Those layers of responsibility and clear lines of communication need to be laid out in advance and everyone needs to understand them so that the chain of command will, in fact, function.

Senator CHAFEE. Mayor, is there anything we can do in the transfer of responsibility to the Army Corps of the barrier?

Mayor CICILLINE. Yes. That would require congressional action, essentially, and you were good enough to come, and I thank you for that. I do think it's a question of fairness, both in terms of having a small part of a local community bear the costs associated and knowing that there is a Federal agency that has both the experience and expertise and, I think, even the willingness to undertake this responsibility. That would require congressional action, and it would be certainly welcomed by all the residents of Rhode Island to know both the resources will be available of the Army Corps of Engineers as well as the professional expertise; to not only maintain it, but to deal with the ongoing regular operation, I think, would be a huge benefit to all Rhode Islanders and the entire region.

Senator CHAFEE. Did I hear you say they are willing?

Mayor CICILLINE. Yes. I think the last time the Army Corps of Engineers were here and they floated the idea, and they said it is up to Congress. We will take anything they tell us to take. So I think they are willing to do it if you direct them to do it.

Chairman COLLINS. Thank you. General Bray, I want to follow up on the interoperability question. You mentioned in your testimony that Senator Chafee has been such an advocate for additional funding in this area. We have been working to have a good formula to the homeland security grant program so that States and local governments can have predictability and sustainability so that they can undertake a multi-year project knowing that the funding is going to be there because that is a major problem, as well. A lot of times, these projects are going to take several years to complete.

What would you think if we carved out a certain percentage of the homeland security grant money or perhaps created a new program that was specifically for interoperable equipment?

The reason I ask this question is this comes up over and over again, as the Mayor has mentioned, and we just don't seem to be making fast enough progress. The same problems during Hurricane Katrina happened and 4½ years before with September 11. What

about our, I hate to use the word in this environment, "earmarking," but earmarked specific funding that would be a competitive grant program, perhaps, just for interoperable equipment? What would you think of that?

General BRAY. Thank you for asking the question, and let me express my appreciation for your support in this area.

You are exactly right. I think a cradle to grave mentality needs to be adopted, particularly for these type of absolutely essential programs. To start a project such as this that is so critical to our overall capabilities, to mitigate an incident like this, not to mention just day-to-day handling of emergencies within a State, I think, is absolutely essential that we are able to see the end state to fruition in a reasonable amount of time.

Our capabilities in the State through this communication system will be absolutely solidified. We are in position to build the backbone that will support this. What is essential is to ensure that the local responders have the resources then to tie into that system. So any methodology that would help us get there and, as you say, with some predictable, some assurance that we will see that end state is absolutely essential.

Chairman COLLINS. Chief, from your perspective, is the lack of predictability of funding and the fact that the formula is changed every single year a problem when you are trying to embark upon a major project like interoperability?

Chief CHARTIER. Yes, for several reasons. One, for a local community to start down the road, from my community alone, we would be looking at a $3.5 to $4 million project, and we are a city of about 100,000. To embark down that road not being completely sure that the funding would maintain all the way through the project to having a complete system at the end is just not a road that most locals are willing to go down because, for one reason, if you've only got half of your city on the system, then you've, in effect, created a worse nightmare because where at least before you could talk to your own folks, maybe not outside, if you start installing assets to infrastructure that only covers half of your city while you are hoping that the rest of the funding shows up next year, you have just muddied the waters further.

So, as the General was saying, if you have cradle to grave where we know that if they start it this year, it's going to be a 5-year project; this is the timeline, these are the increments in which the funding is going to be available, that would be much simpler.

Chairman COLLINS. Thank you. Senator Chafee.

Senator CHAFEE. I think I have gotten all the answers. We will keep working. Senator Collins is urging exercise and practice, and that is important, also.

And, Mayor Cicilline, we were in one of your fine dining establishments last night, Senator Collins and I, and ran into a waiter who was a fellow northern Mainer.

Mayor CICILLINE. We arranged that.

Chairman COLLINS. Well done.

Senator CHAFEE. And I know Senator Collins is on her way to Arkansas to chair another hearing.

Chairman COLLINS. Let me just ask one final question for you, Mr. Horak. It is my understanding that a FEMA survey that was

conducted in May 2000 found that 77 percent of homeowners in the northeast had not prepared a disaster supply kit, had not prepared a hurricane evacuation plan, really had no idea of what they should do if disaster strikes. Now, I think that citizen awareness has been boosted enormously by Hurricane Katrina, but is FEMA undertaking any effort with its State and local partners with the people who are right beside you to educate the public on evacuation routes, on what a supply kit should include, on what they should do during the first 24 hours when they are very likely to be on their own?

Mr. HORAK. As I said in my opening remarks, that is one of our priorities. It is a personal view of mine that the local citizens and families are not as prepared as they should be. I alluded to campaigns tied to the hurricane season, public awareness campaigns. We will be doing one of those with our States. We are also working with the National Weather Service in Taunton who will also be putting on a campaign. That should be a sustained program; not just hurricanes, but all hazards.

There are two sources of readiness information, there's a FEMA web site with a lot of information, www.fema.gov, but also www.ready.gov, which the DHS sponsors, lots of valuable information there as well. We will continue to publicize that. But I emphasize, it is important for States and local governments to be involved in that coordinated sustained campaign.

Chairman COLLINS. Any other members of the panel want to comment on that issue, on any efforts you have underway to try to educate the citizens? Mr. Mayor.

Mayor CICILLINE. We have done a lot in the area, Senator. We have done a fair amount of training of volunteers in connection with shelter volunteers in the shelter system. We have shared information about evacuation routes with residents in the city. We also did a campaign called Ready Providence in which we distributed emergency kits and lots of information on evacuation routes and natural disasters to residents of Providence. Our director of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness has really emphasized the importance of educating the residents of Providence on how to respond to a natural disaster, what we need to have, and has actually provided some materials.

Chairman COLLINS. That's great. Anyone else?

Mr. WARREN. We have established a committee that is working to especially educate the people on the web site to make sure they understand, and then also, if people can't get to it, to make sure we get those materials to them.

Chairman COLLINS. That's good. Thank you all. I think that citizen awareness that we ended on is often neglected. So I am very pleased to hear that you are proactive in that area.

Every year, the ranking Democrat on my Committee, Senator Lieberman and I—I think it is September that is National Preparedness Month—always do a press event, and no one ever pays any attention. And, as a result, I think that most families are not prepared. But as I said, I think we have an opportunity that has been provided to us by last year's catastrophe to catch the attention of the public, to educate our citizens, and to make sure that they understand that they are part of the solution; that individual

citizen and family preparedness is also necessary to supplement what sounds like terrific efforts that this entire State has embarked upon.

So I want to thank you all for your hard work, your dedication, and, most of all, for your service by coming here today. It's been very helpful. It has given us insights on what a small but vulnerable State has undertaken. You have a true champion in Senator Chafee. He's been a real leader on this issue and has a special understanding of the challenges faced by coastal areas. So I look forward to continuing to work with Senator Chafee and all of you. Thank you for your participation.

The hearing record will remain open for 15 days for the submission of any additional materials. This hearing is now adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 12:16 p.m., the Committee was adjourned.]

# APPENDIX

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**Prepared Statement of Donald L. Carcieri**
**Governor**
**State of Rhode Island**
**April 20, 2006**

Senator Chafee, Senator Collins, I am pleased to have the opportunity to testify before you today.

In the wake of Hurricane Katrina, we all know how important it is for our state to be fully prepared if a hurricane should strike our state.

Since 1851, Rhode Island has experienced 9 direct hits. We've learned firsthand what can happen to our capital city when a Hurricane strikes.

During the hurricane of 1938, the storm hit Rhode Island at high tide, flooding Providence's business district. Residents drowned. Cars were submerged beneath 7 feet of water. Buildings were damaged by the fury of the storm. Sixteen years later our capital city was flooded once again by tidal waves from Hurricane Carol. Just like the Hurricane of '38, Carol arrived near the time of high tide.

Southern Rhode Island had wind gusts of 115 to 135 mph and T. F. Green Airport sustained 90 mph winds. Carol took a great toll on Southern Rhode Island. From Westerly to Newport, 5000 buildings were destroyed.

In Westerly, it's estimated that there were tides up to 13 feet above mean water. 600,000 Rhode Islanders lost power. The storm also affected our capital city with water rising within 1 foot of the record water line on the commemorative Plaque for the 38 Hurricane at Old Market House in Downtown Providence.

After the hurricanes in Florida nearly 2 years ago, I directed the Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency to begin updating Rhode Island's hurricane plans. The lessons that we learned through Hurricane Katrina have reinvigorated that process. Under the leadership of our new EMA director, Bob Warren and our new Adjutant General, General Bray we have been working to make our plan the strongest and most effective in the nation. In fact, a team from the United States Department of Homeland Security recently visited our state and praised our efforts.

We are currently working with a consultant to assist us in developing a comprehensive hurricane evacuation plan for our state. I have allocated $20,000 for this purpose and the plan will be complete in June. This plan will give us a blueprint to follow and will highlight the steps we need to take before, during and after a hurricane. Our plan will address issues such as evacuation and resource management while the storm is still along the southeastern coastline.

As part of our efforts to better prepare our state for a hurricane, I have asked all municipalities for a report documenting that local emergency plans are as comprehensive as possible for people with disabilities.

Last fall I attended a Hurricane Preparedness Meeting with Bob Warren and our state's Emergency Management Agency officials and local municipalities to ensure that all cities and town have effective evacuation routes as well as hurricane preparedness plans. We have already identified escape routes for 21 coastal communities that might be inundated by flooding during a major storm and we have posted that information on the EMA website. We have also worked with the Red Cross to solve the shortage in evacuation shelters. In fact, a total of 12 of a targeted 30 shelters have already been approved.

To make certain that our hurricane plan will ensure public safety to the utmost degree, the EMA has been developing a Donations Management Plan and we are working on partnering with the Salvation Army, the Red Cross and the Rhode Island Community Food Bank to receive these items.

The Rhode Island EMA has also been working with the Department of Environmental Management to address the state's debris management plan. If a category 3 hurricane were to hit our state, it could generate as much waste as the state would normally produce in 3 years. We must have the capability to clear critical infrastructure and dispose of debris.

Additionally, EMA has worked with FEMA to create a plan to distribute food, water and ice to our citizens.

Since I took office, I have made it a priority to enhance Rhode Island's preparedness for hurricanes and emergencies of any kind. I have allocated $50,000 each year since I have been in office for ongoing support of the Hurricane Barrier. Our Hurricane Barrier was tested in July before the Army Corps of Engineers and it passed inspection.

Since fiscal year 03, Rhode Island has received $41.5 M in homeland security grants. That is enabling us to move forward with a host of projects including urban search and rescue, hazard teams, and mass casualty trailers to name just a few.

Currently our state has requested nearly $60 M in homeland security grants. As you know, we are only guaranteed $7 M. We are very concerned about the new process. In order to continue the progress we are making in better preparing our state for a hurricane or a disaster, we must receive the funding we need to protect the people of Rhode Island.

I urge you to address this pressing issue so that we can build upon the momentum we've gained.

For example, we are making progress in facilitating communication among first responders. In fact we have enhanced interoperability in Washington County and work is underway to bring this standardized communication system for first responders in Newport, North Providence, Providence and South County. However, in order to complete this statewide system, our Emergency Management Agency is seeking $32 M in homeland security grants.

We also have Nextel radio systems in our hospitals and in every community in our state to enable first responders to communicate with emergency rooms.

And last year we dedicated a high-tech $1.4 M mobile Command Center which will enable us to set up a post anywhere in our state and will allow federal, state and local agencies to communicate effectively during an emergency.

Two years ago Burrillville and several surrounding communities pooled their resources from homeland security grants to purchase a mobile command post. And due to the generosity of a local resident the City of Newport also has a mobile command post.

Additionally, Rhode Island E911 has implemented a pilot program that utilizes state-of-the-art technology which enables dispatchers to view a location from

many different angles. This gives first responders all of the pertinent information before they get to a scene.

To have more cohesive emergency operations, I have recommended a $20M bond to locate the Emergency Operations Center, E911, IT and EMA to the Pastore Complex. The General Assembly has heard testimony on this issue and is considering this request.

We also will be seeking $6 M from the federal government to make this a state-of-the-art facility a reality.

Last week, my staff and I met with Senator Chafee to discuss emergency response planning for the Port of Providence in the event that a series of catastrophic events occur. We saw what happened with Katrina, with the Hurricane followed by the flood. We are seeking up to $1M to enable us to be better prepared for any type of chain reaction we may experience at the Port of Providence. We all know that with LNG located there, that presents high risks which could easily be compounded. We have to be ready for it.

In closing, let me make one final point. Over the last two years, Rhode Island has made a tremendous amount of progress in updating our ability to deal with a major hurricane.

Since September 11th, there is no doubt that much of our energy has been devoted to concerns raised by the war on terror. In fact, terrorism has been a major focus for emergency management officials in every state and community throughout the country.

But we have also been working to ensure that Rhode Island is ready to meet the challenges presented by a hurricane similar to Katrina. While much work remains to be done, I believe that we are on schedule for completing our preparations, and that we will have a complete plan in place, before the beginning of this year's hurricane season.

Once again, I would like to thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify before you today.

Testimony of Mayor David N. Cicilline
Mayor of Providence, Rhode Island
Senate Committee on Homeland Security & Governmental Affairs
Field Hearing – Providence Foundation
April 20, 2006

Madam Chair, Senator Chafee…

Welcome to Providence Madam Chair, and thank you for the opportunity to offer my testimony to this esteemed committee.

On behalf of our city, I thank you for the committee's efforts to protect our city, state, and nation from the threats of terrorism and natural disaster.

As our focus today underscores, recent events have taught us that we do not have the luxury of preparing for terrorist events at the expense of being ready for natural disasters.

Both threats are imminent and share equal priority.

In fact, with a terrorist incident, it is a matter of if it will happen. With a natural disaster like a major hurricane, it is only a matter of when.

In Providence, we know exactly what a devastating hurricane can do to our city.

If you walk straight out of this building about 100 yards to the Amica Building at 10 Weybosset, you can reach up eight feet to a brass plaque that shows how high the water rose during the Hurricane of 1938. And several inches under that is another plaque showing the waterline from Hurricane Carol in 1954.

The hurricane of '38 cost about 300 million in pre-World War II dollars. Needless to say, if that kind of flooding were to happen in Providence again, the costs would be enormous.

280 acres that make up the economic engine of the State of Rhode Island and the Southern New England region would be drowned.

Hundreds of businesses, thousands of jobs, hundreds of condos and apartments, the region's transportation hub, the seat of City government, our federal and state court houses, state offices, the region's major newspaper, dozens of facilities from four universities, our city's power, sewer and water systems – all of these would be affected.

Fortunately, something now stands in the way of a major hurricane and that kind of devastation in Providence, and that is our Hurricane Barrier.

As you know, Southern New England has a wealth of precious assets, but when you consider what it protects, our hurricane barrier may be one of the most precious.

I am pleased to report that, with a tremendous amount of support from Senator Chafee, we have invested a great deal in recent years to bolster our hurricane barrier.

Over the last several years, over $2 million has been invested to upgrade the facility. Most of that has been made possible through federal funds, but our local property taxpayers have also shared much of the burden and the facility is maintained by our own Providence Department of Public Works.

We are confident that the hurricane barrier can withstand up to a Category 4 storm surge, which would be 18 feet above median water levels, but there is still more we need to do in order to fully bring it up to date according to the experts.

The major upgrade required is to the electrical system, but there is a variety of smaller fixes that should be made as well.

When the hurricane barrier was first constructed, it was envisioned as a "local protection project" but its vital function has clearly outgrown this definition.

While we are confident in our hurricane barrier, it is only responsible that we are prepared for a breach or for some other kind of unforeseen natural disaster.

There are several other areas in which our emergency response plans need the kind of fortification that can only be provided at the federal level.

The FEMA maps that we rely on to estimate coastal flooding hazards are over 20 years-old, and new development has altered watersheds and floodplains. We strongly support your honorable colleague, Senator Reed's National Flood Mapping Act that would require an update of these maps.

We need funding to support the reengineering of roadways used as evacuation routes to better support high volume traffic and create extra large breakdown lanes to aid traffic flow.

While we have a plan for emergency shelters, the cost of maintaining them over a number of days or weeks is prohibitive for a municipality. We need support to cover costs such as the purchase of generators, the construction of bathrooms and showers, and larger cooking facilities.

These investments will pay tremendous dividends in the event of a major natural disaster. Madam Chair, Senator Chafee: I am extremely grateful to have had the opportunity to submit testimony to this honorable committee.

Thank you very much.

**Prepared Statement of Robert J. Warren**

**Executive Director**

**Rhode Island Emergency Mangement Agency**

**April 20, 2006**

**Good morning.**

**The Governor and General Bray have spoken of the many initiatives that have been and are on going within the State. As the Executive Director of the Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency I am in contact with the local and federal partners that the State interacts with on a daily basis. As such my remarks today will address not only issues that affect Rhode Island but also those that I feel are important to maintain the unique relationship we enjoy with those partners.**

**Being the Ocean State, all Rhode Islanders recognize the value and fragility of Narragansett Bay. This resource is also one of my biggest concerns. The population that now lives or earns a living from the bay has increased tremendously in recent years. Yet, our latest inundation studies of the bay were done in 1993. Congress must give the Army Corps of Engineers and other agencies which perform these types of studies the appropriate level of funding to maintain effective programs. Responders and more importantly our municipal planners cannot accurately predict and prevent damage without current and up to date data. Funding for these programs will help prevent disasters from**

**future storms. Congress must make every effort to maintain these programs even though the benefit may seem to be in distance years.**

**The past six months have been the most active that I can remember in my public safety career. The lessons learned from Hurricane Katrina have caused us to re-exam our assumptions and priorities. The plans and programs in place today would not be successful without our federal and local partners. The amount of planning and program requirements flowing down from the federal level is placing a strain on our planning capabilities. As important has planning for hurricanes is none of us can forget that other dangers still exist; terrorism, pandemic flu and our own local hazards cannot be ignored. My agency now is getting planning and exercises guidelines and deadlines for program devolvement from DHS, FEMA, NGB, CDC and NRC with what seem like little coordination or recognition of our resources. Most of my staff is working on several plans simultaneously with conflicting deadlines and schedules. Only two communities in the State have full time emergency management staff. Most are either part time or do the work as a collateral duty. I ask you to take this issue back to Washington on behalf of RIEMA and that of our local partners, who are making every effort to meet the demands I place on them to assist or coordinate with RIEMA.**

**This issue was also raised at the FEMA regions 1 & 2 conference last week in Albany by the State directors of several emergency management agencies. A recent example is the DHS regional hurricane drill which was scheduled for the same dates as our regional conference with the New England States and Canada.**

**My last remarks do not imply that we do not have a high level of cooperation with our federal partners. FEMA Region#1 has been more then helpful during my tenure with RIEMA. FEMA had a representative located in our State EOC during the entire week we were planning to receive evacuees from New Orleans and during the flooding we experienced in October. We are using FEMA staff to help rewrite our plan for Resource Management Plan as the General mentioned. Our three military Emergency Preparedness Liaison Officers (Col. Johnson, Col. Brennan, and Capt. Borges-Dubois) have been active and know all my staff. They were also in the Emergency Operations Center in October and routinely attend meetings at RIEMA.**

**I truly believe that should Rhode Island face an event the magnitude of Katrina our relationship and communications with the various federal government agencies will be an asset not a hindrance.**

**Another issue that I feel needs to be addressed is the use of Homeland Security funds for multiple disciplines. DHS guidelines in the past have told us what the funds can be used for in any given year. I think that this evaluation needs to be expanded to include areas that of natural or other hazards. For example, one request that continually is received from local government is to use DHS funds for generators for public shelters. This has not been allowed in the past. Local directors feel that this is one of the most basic ways to protect their citizens. These types of expenses need to be allowed by grant requirements.**

**The response to Katrina was the largest involving mutual in history and we need to examine ways to make this response more efficient and easier for the responding states and local communities. The Emergency Management Aid Compact (EMAC) was used with great success in the last two hurricane seasons. EMAC is a State not federal asset. In all practically the system is usually funded after the Stafford Act is in effect so I feel that congress should take and interest in this valuable aid system. The best way at this point would be to make it easier and quicker for the payment to the responding communities. It is not my intent to lead you to believe system in place does not work or that this is totally a federal issue. It just seems the paperwork between communities and states and then the federal government leaves the local communities or States using their own funds for a longer period of time then should be allowed. As we look at more national mutual aid in the future, I just feel this is an area that needs further examination and innervations.**

**One specific request that I do have is for some direct funding to Rhode Island for assistance in building a state of the art Emergency Management Center. The Governor has placed before the legislature a request for 20 million dollars to rehab a State owned building for E911, DoIT and RIEMA. If the federal government could contribute another 6 million dollars specifically earmarked for the EOC that would be a great help in giving my staff a suitable center to function during these local and national incidents.**

**Thank you for allowing me to appear before you this morning on these important issues.**

**PREPARED STATEMENT OF KENNETH L. HORAK**

**United States Senate**
**Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs**
**April 20, 2006 Hearing**

Good morning, Madame Chairman and members of the Committee. My name is Kenneth Horak. I am the Acting Regional Director, Region I, of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). On behalf of FEMA and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), I would like to thank you for the opportunity to brief you today on FEMA's efforts with regards to hurricane planning and readiness in the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations. This discussion will include FEMA's general authority to mitigate, prepare for, respond to and recover from disasters of all types, FEMA's role and activities in emergency planning in Rhode Island, and FEMA's specific activities associated with preparing for the 2006 Hurricane Season.

Living in the "Ocean State," Rhode Islanders have certainly witnessed their share of hurricanes. For example, some long term residents of Rhode Island can even still recount, and others, noting watermark plaques on certain buildings, are reminded of, the catastrophic unnamed 1938 Hurricane. The Fox Point hurricane barrier completed in 1966, located at the mouth of the Providence River is an ominous reminder of the 1938 Hurricane and Hurricane Carol in 1954. Hurricane Bob in 1991 was one of the more recent destructive hurricanes to have hit Rhode Island.

**FEMA's Role and Statutory Authority to Support State and Local Governments**

FEMA derives its primary authority from the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, P.L. 93-288, as amended. This act provides the authority for mitigating the effects of natural and manmade disasters, through awarding grants to states; assisting in preparedness and readiness planning with our Federal, State, local, federally recognized tribal and private sector partners; coordinating the Federal response; provide recovery assistance; and establishing the role of the Federal Coordinating Officer. With the transfer of the National Disaster Medical System (NDMS) to the Department of Homeland Security in 2003, FEMA also acquired the authority to activate NDMS to meet the medical needs of the victims of an emergency.[1]

Through FEMA's mitigation grant programs -- Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM), Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) and the post-disaster Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP), FEMA provides funds and technical assistance to develop State and Local Mitigation Plans (LMP), which assess the communities' risks and vulnerabilities and propose mitigation solutions to reduce those risks. Mitigation planning should be included as part of a community's overall planning effort. By having an LMP, communities have a better understanding of their risks and an awareness of the infrastructure and properties vulnerable to those risks, and can apply for mitigation funding when it is made available under the mitigation grant programs mentioned. Mitigation grant programs are funded on a 75 percent Federal and 25 percent State or local cost-share basis.

[1] The Public Health Security and Bioterrorism Preparedness and Response Act of 2002.

For example, following Hurricane Bob, Rhode Island used FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program funds totaling $308,000 to repair a pump at the Fox Point Hurricane Barrier, to acquire communications equipment and generators for critical facilities, and to initiate a nationally recognized local mitigation planning process for Rhode Island cities and towns. These initiatives will benefit Rhode Island's preparedness for hurricanes well into the future.

The role of FEMA, the Department of Homeland Security and other Federal, State, local, tribal and private sector partners is further outlined in the National Response Plan (NRP), the nation's all-discipline, all-hazard plan for establishing a single, comprehensive framework for the management of domestic incidents.

FEMA and DHS' new Preparedness Directorate coordinates initiatives that include planning and technical assistance for State, local and tribal governments, and provide support to National Incident Management System (NIMS) implementation and the National Emergency Management Baseline Capability Assessment Program. Further, FEMA operates the Emergency Management Institute (EMI), a national training center for emergency planning, exercise design, and incident command operations for Federal, State, local, tribal and private sector individuals.

**FEMA Region I Support and Coordination Activities**

FEMA's Region I, which includes Rhode Island, continually supports all-hazards emergency response planning and is acutely aware of the importance of catastrophic emergency response planning. Because of the relatively small size of the New England States, Region I has encouraged a regional, rather than a State-by-State, approach to disaster planning and response. Our designated staging areas, such as Westover Air Force Reserve Base in Massachusetts, support contingencies throughout New England. Other backup staging areas in each New England State have been developed for use, if needed.

This regional approach was validated at the Catastrophic Continuity of Operations/ Continuity of Government (COOP/COG) Planning Conference held during the first week of April 2006. Representatives from FEMA Regions I and II, and the States represented by these Regions, developed common planning priorities. We have provided each New England State with a reference compact disk, which includes regional plans and documents to encourage integration across State lines. Our States also actively support coordination across the Canadian border.

There are numerous examples of coordination, including the following:

- FEMA Region I staff members are attending the FEMA-U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Senior Leadership Seminar and a meeting of the National Emergency Response Teams (ERT-N) this week to coordinate activities for the upcoming hurricane season. The Region will convene a meeting to brief the New England

States on information distributed at this conference in an effort to ensure consistent FEMA-State operations. Additionally, Region I plans to schedule a briefing for Congressional staff representing our States on FEMA's "concept of operations" for this hurricane season.

- Region I has a close working relationship with Rhode Island State officials and conducts proactive regional and incident specific planning. As an example, Regional staff has been providing extensive technical assistance to the Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency (RIEMA) to develop their commodity distribution, which is the distribution of food, water, ice and other needed materials in the wake of a disaster. Region I will continue to respond to future requests for technical assistance to enhance Rhode Island's emergency management capabilities.

- The Region I Voluntary Agency Liaison (VAL) meets regularly with Rhode Island officials to provide technical assistance. An example of technical assistance includes guidance provided by the FEMA VAL to formalize the Rhode Island Voluntary Organization Active in Disaster (RI VOAD) in 1999 to become a National VOAD member with bylaws and plans.

- FEMA Region I chairs the Regional Interagency Steering Committee comprised of National Response Plan (NRP) Emergency Support Function (ESF) agency representatives. Meetings are conducted quarterly, often with the participation of State emergency officials, addressing issues such as an incident and hazard specific response and multi-agency coordination. Other common themes include the distribution of commodities including ice, water and meals, and restoration of power, water and sewer. Regular efforts are made to share information on capabilities available to assist in disaster response. At the most recent meeting in March, detailed presentations were given and discussions conducted on Lessons Learned from Katrina. Operations officer's meetings with State and Federal operations officers are also conducted regularly to coordinate specific issues such as commodity movement and State's concerns. Additionally, Region I conducts a monthly conference call with the States to ensure continuous communication.

- FEMA Region I provides National Incident Management System/Incident Command System (NIMS/ICS) compliant training and exercise opportunities, with a specific focus on joint, unified State/Federal operations. FEMA Region I has coordinated with the State of Rhode Island to train 32 Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) instructors.

- FEMA Region I will partake in the planning and performance of one of six regional tabletop exercises being conducted along the East Coast as well as along the Gulf Coast. These exercises are being conducted by the Office of Grants and Training in the Preparedness Directorate in conjunction with other Federal departments and agencies. This effort is to provide a forum to consolidate the lessons learned from after action reports and conferences. It will also facilitate a

process to validate the revised coordination and response plans addressing specific challenges that could arise if another catastrophic storm strikes during the 2006 Hurricane Season. The proposed series is to be completed no later than June 1, 2006.

- Two RIEMA employees have completed FEMA's Hurricane Readiness Workshop Train the Trainer. Numerous members of the Rhode Island emergency management community have completed online ICS training offered by FEMA. Rhode Island has been particularly active in conducting State exercises, including six full-scale exercises in the last two years. Rhode Island also hosted and participated in the OPERATION YANKEE, an operational preparedness exercise developed and conducted by FEMA and the Naval War College in Newport, R.I., held in 2003. The two-day event attracted over 200 participants, with Federal, State and tribal representatives, emergency management, law enforcement, security, health, medical, volunteer, and emergency services.

**Protocols and Coordination in a Disaster: Chain of Command**

As I have described earlier in this testimony, under the Stafford Act, FEMA is authorized to supplement the efforts and available resources of State, local governments and disaster relief organizations for an emergency or major disaster declared by the President. We can lean forward and move Federal teams, commodities and equipment to Federal facilities, but we cannot actually provide assistance under the law, unless the Governor asks, certifying that the event is beyond the State's capability and the President declares an Emergency or Major Disaster. Commodities and equipment that may be necessary and made available are pre-positioned in a number of logistics centers and mobile support locations, strategically placed across the nation.

The Stafford Act acknowledges the constitutional authority of the Governor to respond to incidents affecting Rhode Island through the Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency, which incorporates the States' mutual aid system and principles of the ICS, and provides the structure through which State and local government agencies respond. RIEMA coordinates the overall management of an emergency to include requests for support and resources from other State agencies, other States under the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC), and supplemental assistance from the Federal government. Internal training within Region I was conducted on the State's request process to streamline requests for assistance, and plans are in process to conduct this training with the States of Region I.

In order to assist Rhode Island and other New England States in expeditiously obtaining Federal assistance, Region I has prepared a new State Declarations Handbook and is planning a workshop to promote further familiarization with this process. This project is under final review at FEMA headquarters and is anticipated to be ready for this hurricane season. Additionally, a seminar was held by Region I for the New England states on declarations processing and available disaster assistance in January, 2004.

In advance of a hurricane, Region I follows existing protocols to activate the Regional Response Coordination Center (RRCC) including Emergency Support Function (ESF) personnel as appropriate, and to deploy the State Liaison Officer (SLO) and Emergency Response Team-Advanced (ERT-A) personnel to begin pre-landfall coordination with State emergency management officials to address life saving and life sustaining response requirements. The primary SLO for Rhode Island is a R.I .resident and has served in this capacity for 21 years to provide support during numerous emergency operations and exercises. The ERT-A will work with their State counterparts to assess State resource needs, and commodities may be pre-staged at the Federal staging area in anticipation of need. The RRCC works with the affected State to identify critical facilities such as potable water, power and sewage; and needs for assistance or commodities including evacuation, affordable and accessible housing, and food. This process is facilitated by the ESF leads, for example, the Department of Transportation provides transportation and evacuation support, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers provides assistance with debris and other public works and the Department of Health and Human Services provides health and medical support.

Several additional FEMA teams may be activated, including the Agency's National Response Coordination Center Team, the Hurricane Liaison Team, and the five Mobile Emergency Response Support Detachments. FEMA headquarters may deploy an Emergency Response Team National (ERT-N) to supplement Regional staff, and may alert National Disaster Medical System (NDMS) and Urban Search and Rescue (US&R) to prepare for deployment. Once an event has occurred, the Rapid Needs Assessment (RNA) team may deploy to determine critical needs or issues in the State. When a facility is available and prepared for staff, a Joint Field Office (JFO) would be opened to support the disaster response and recovery efforts. FEMA's Stafford Act recovery programs would be carried out throughout this process.

As part of this planning effort and consistent with the States plans and priorities, FEMA will continue to work with other Federal agencies, the State and other stakeholders to:

- Improve Federal support to the emergency management response capability of local, State and Federal agencies to rapidly respond to emergencies, major disasters, and other Incidents of National Significance.

- Ensure unified command and a unity of effort through rigorous adherence to the principles of NIMS. Region I is anticipating the designation by the Secretary of DHS of a Principal Federal Official and a Federal Coordinating Officer in advance of this hurricane season. Once those persons are identified, Region I intends to hold a briefing with the States and Regional staff to discuss concept of operations and ensure coordination.

- Streamline national level emergency contracting procedures and plan to ensure an adequate inventory of response and recovery assets are strategically pre-positioned throughout the country.

**2006 Hurricane Season Improvements**

The historic 2005 hurricane season challenged FEMA as never before. The agency supported the largest evacuation in U.S. history, coordinated the delivery of approximately four times the amount of water and two times the amount of ice delivered for all four Florida hurricanes combined in 2004, coordinated the rescue of 36,000 individuals with U.S. Coast Guard and FEMA Urban Search & Rescue teams and provided temporary housing assistance to an unprecedented 825,000 families displaced from their homes. While catastrophic Hurricane Katrina resulted in a record response from all levels of government, the lessons learned from FEMA's response will prove invaluable for the improvement of future major disaster responses.

FEMA approaches the 2006 hurricane season with a renewed sense of commitment and urgency to improve our service to the Nation by building on a solid foundation of experienced professionals and the lessons learned from last year's unprecedented disaster response activities. Techniques and technologies that were employed in the response to Hurricanes Rita and Wilma in the 2005 season to improve response coordination have been institutionalized. And, as a result of intensive collaborative analysis of response and recovery programs post-Katrina, FEMA is implementing multiple new measures designed to strengthen essential functions so the agency can more effectively respond to all disasters. These improvements are designed to supplement the experience and skills of FEMA employees with 21st century tools and technology - maximizing the agency's performance regardless of disaster size, cause or complexity.

Following are some examples of some of the national initiatives for improvement that will be in place for the 2006 hurricane season.

- Improving Federal coordination in the immediate response, by increasing the level of coordination with the Department of Defense (DOD). A Defense Coordinating Officer (DCO) and support staff are anticipated to be stationed at FEMA Region I by July to smooth and expedite the provision of Department of Defense support. The identified DCO has met with Regional staff and briefed the States at the recent Catastrophic COOP/COG Planning Conference. In addition, the Region maintains close coordination with the Regional Emergency Preparedness Liaison Officer (EPLO) staff. FEMA headquarters has been working with DOD to shorten the time from request to delivery of assets by pre-identifying military capabilities and developing the scope of work and cost information for support in communications, ground transportation, air transportation, medical support and search and rescue.
- Improving situational awareness and communications interoperability, through development of the DHS Secretary's Situational Awareness Teams; and augmentation of survivable and interoperable communications capabilities. Region I has actively coordinated with New England states to include Rhode Island on issues of communications interoperability. Emphasis has been placed on types of equipment, frequency management and cross-coordination of support capability in any operational situation.

- Hiring, training and developing the two FEMA Incident Response Support Team (FIRST) teams to support the Federal response. These are small, rapidly deployable teams that can provide support directly to State, local and tribal governments on scene, providing technical advice, situational awareness, communications and assistance in requesting and employing lifesaving Federal assets. They intend to deploy within 2 hours of notification to be on-scene within 12 hours, and are a forward component of the ERT-A.

- Improving logistics and commodity preparations, by replenishing and restocking essential disaster commodities at logistics and staging areas, and working in advance with vendors. FEMA headquarters will have enhanced logistics support from the Defense Logistics Agency to ensure available stockpiles of emergency meals, water, tarps, plastic sheeting, medical equipment and essential pharmaceuticals.

- FEMA is actively improving the visibility of disaster assets and commodities from requisition to arrival at disaster locations, thus enhancing logistics management. FEMA headquarters is improving delivery of disaster commodities within States, and implementing a commodity tracking initiative, the Total Asset Visibility Project: Phase I, which will provide FEMA with an improved ability to manage its inventory of certain commodities and to track the location of trailers carrying commodities. Phase I will address commodities leaving the logistics warehouses in Atlanta, GA and Fort Worth, TX, regardless of where the disaster occurs.

- As part of the national evacuation planning initiative, we recognize that given the small size of New England, an evacuation in catastrophic disaster conditions would require close coordination among all of our states both for transportation routing and sheltering of evacuees. The experience gained by FEMA Region I, the State of Rhode Island, and the other New England States in housing and caring for Katrina evacuees has provided valuable experience. Rhode Island was one of two New England States which volunteered to formally shelter Katrina Evacuees, for which we would like to extend our appreciation. At peak, Rhode Island housed 206 people in 67 units. In addition to assisting with local sheltering needs, FEMA Region I deployed a large number of staff to the Gulf States in support of Hurricane Katrina, and learned many valuable lessons through that experience. We would also like to commend Rhode Island for the significant effort it has made over the past year to expand hurricane evacuation planning activities. FEMA and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers provided the state with the basis for this activity in 1995 with the publication of the State's Hurricane Evacuation Study and Map Atlas. These maps provided Rhode Island with a foundation for their new evacuation maps which have recently been made available to its citizens online.

- Strengthening our emergency medical response. In 1990, NDMS executed a Memorandum of Understanding with Rhode Island Hospital to serve as the sponsor institution for one of the nation's first ten Disaster Medical Assistance

Teams (DMATs). Designated RI-1 DMAT, the team has served with distinction in responses to many incidents, including natural disasters throughout the U.S.; avian influenza outbreaks in the southeast; the World Trade Center attacks in New York on 9/11/2001; the 2002 Winter Olympic Games in Utah; and a wide range of National Special Security Events. In its home state, RI-1 DMAT provided medical support throughout the recovery and investigation of the crash of EgyptAir flight 990 in 1999, and in response to the Station nightclub fire in West Warwick in 2003. The two National Disaster Medical System (NDMS) representatives in Region I have established close working relations with state and federal colleagues to ensure seamless support to State medical requirements.

- Strengthening our search and rescue response. FEMA headquarters continues to work with numerous Federal agencies including FEMA's Urban Search and Rescue elements, the U.S. Coast Guard and the Department of the Interior (Park Service) to agree on roles, responsibilities and available resources for structural collapse rescue, water rescue and wilderness rescue.

- Developing the 2006 Concept of Operations for Hurricane season: FEMA headquarters has been working with the primary and supporting ESF agencies in identifying the tasks that should be done starting 96 or more hours out, then 72 hours, 48 hours, etc. to ensure we have all Federal supporting and operational functions synchronized in the response. FEMA plans to activate more assets (teams and commodities) sooner and place them closer to anticipated landfall, while keeping them safe, though we recognize that with the variables of hurricanes this can be problematic.

- Improving customer service and expediting help to disaster victims, by improving shelter population management, and doubling registration capacity to 200,000 persons per day. We will also deploy mobile registration intake centers (MRICs), recognizing that many disaster victims may be stranded or in congregate shelters with no communications, and unable to register for assistance. We are also enhancing our identity verification process during registration to help improve our stewardship responsibilities while simultaneously reducing the delays associated with disaster victim identity verification.

- Expanding our home inspections capacity and improving the speed and suitability of temporary housing, and enhancing the debris removal process.

- FEMA plans to increase our disaster workforce and is training employees for disaster readiness. FEMA Region I is providing ongoing training to approximately 360 generalists from New England, New York and New Jersey throughout April to June.

And finally, as Federal, State, local and tribal governments become better prepared in anticipation of this hurricane season, it is vitally important that individuals and families also be prepared. New England has not had a significant hurricane event in many years,

potentially resulting in a lack of individual preparedness. I recognize that States generally hold public awareness campaigns at the start of hurricane season, and encourage that they continue that practice and encourage strong public awareness campaigns. FEMA Region I public affairs staff will coordinate with and support the States to ensure a unified message.

Of course, preparation for improved emergency management must be a consistent process. FEMA will continue to make other significant enhancements beyond this hurricane season to help further strengthen the Nation's preparedness and ability to respond and recover from disasters, whatever their cause. We look forward to continuing our partnerships with the State of Rhode Island, tribal and local governments, as well as the private sector, community organizations and individuals in identifying their roles and responsibilities. Together, we will strengthen our ability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, and recover from catastrophic events.

Madame Chairman and Members of the Committee, thank you again for the opportunity to appear before you today. I would be pleased to answer any questions you may have.

**STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS**

**MILITARY STAFF**
**OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL**
**Command Readiness Center**
**645 New London Avenue**
**Cranston, Rhode Island 02920-3097**

**DONALD L. CARCIERI**
**Governor**
**MG ROBERT T. BRAY**
**Director**

April 18, 2006

The Honorable Lincoln Chafee
United States Senator
170 Westminster Street, Suite 110
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

Subject: Written presentation for the 20 April 2006 Hearing on Rhode Island Homeland Security Priorities, Preparation for the 2006 Hurricane Season

Dear Senator Chafee:

I am grateful for the opportunity to present and discuss the State of Rhode Island's Preparation for the 2006 Hurricane Season and to address the specific involvement by the Office of the Adjutant General in that preparation. This document provides background information about the Rhode Island State Area Command (STARC) and is applicable to the preparation for the 2006 Hurricane Season.

Organization

The Adjutant General is a cabinet level position in Rhode Island State government. The Adjutant General through the State Area Command directs the establishment, operation, organization and maintenance of the military forces of the State, composed of the Rhode Island Army and Air National Guard, the Rhode Island National Guard Reserve (State Security Brigade) and the State Militia. Sub-programs include Administration (Adjutant General, fiscal support, military funerals, educational benefits), Military Property (utilities, janitorial, maintenance, supply purchases, military vehicle repairs), Army Guard (operations, maintenance, and personnel support) and Air Guard (operations, maintenance, personnel support, Quonset firefighters and security guards). Responsibilities include training and preparing military forces of the state to support active forces in the defense of our nation and its national security interests; providing peacetime responses to state emergencies; participating in counter-drug efforts and initiating drug demand reduction programs within our communities; overseeing the Governor's Plan for Homeland Security; overseeing the Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency by planning and implementing all state hazard preparedness programs.

Disaster Preparation

The Rhode Island National Guard and the Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency within the Rhode Island State Area Command, maintain full spectrum response capability. Planning, preparation, operational control, response, and recovery competency and readiness are maintained as core competencies. Continuous and dynamic review of existing plans is conducted to keep them current.

Continuity of operation plans is current for the Rhode Island Army and Air National Guard. Rhode Island military support plans to Civilian Authorities are current.

The Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency has contracted with a vendor to write a "Hurricane Response Plan," which will become an annex to the State's Emergency Operations Plan. The plan is to be completed by 1 June 2006. Coordination with other State agencies and the thirty nine municipalities in the State is on-going, dynamic and aggressive to collaborate and coordinate response capabilities through the planning and preparation process.

The Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency provides training and training opportunities with State and Federal resources to ensure multi-agency and multi-jurisdiction response capability. Collaboration with agencies and communities to conduct exercises with an "all hazard" approach are being conducted. These exercises focus on command and control through the Incident Command System, plans and preparation following the National Incident Management System and the National Response Plan.

Most noteworthy for hurricane response capability are the efforts to establish a network radio communication bridge throughout the state with an 800 MHz system and the installation of a functional Emergency Operation Center at the Command Readiness Center in Cranston. The 800 MHz system, providing an integrated radio network for all first response emergency agencies, is approximately one third complete. The State Emergency Operation Center is projected to be completed by 1 June 2006. Both projects are supported by Federal, State and Local funds.

The Rhode Island National Guard has been postured in a state of readiness since the attacks of 11 September 2001. A twenty four hour, seven days a week Joint Operation Center (JOC) is maintained at the Command Readiness Center in Cranston. The JOC monitors State and national, military and civilian communication pertaining to homeland security, natural disaster conditions, and military operations. The JOC is able to communicate inter-agency, multi-jurisdiction, and multi-agency. The JOC is able to contact the chain of command of the Rhode Island State Area Command 24/7.

Resources

Hurricane preparedness and response capability, as well as capability for all hazards, is dependent on time and funding. The following are key areas requiring additional funding for full spectrum, all hazard capability in the State of Rhode Island:

**Emergency Operations Center:** The Military Staff requested funds for a new project to create an Emergency Operations Center at the Command Readiness Center. This funding will provide the Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency with an Emergency Operations Center by renovating a storage area at the Command Readiness Center.

The current area for the Emergency Operations Center does not support the space needed to post a complete mapping and task board system used during mock and actual disaster exercises. The Federal Emergency Management Agency mandates a minimum requirement that an Emergency Operations Center be self sufficient for a two-week period. This includes a generator for electricity, heat, food, water, and sleeping space. Currently, the agency has a generator but no storage space for food or water and no sleeping space. The agency has identified a portion of the Command Readiness Center, which is currently being used as storage space, that it believes can be renovated to meet certain Federal Emergency Management Agency standards.

**Emergency Operations Center-New Building:** The Governor's Office requested funds to renovate the Varley Building on the grounds of the Pastore Center as an Emergency Operations Center. This funding will provide the Emergency Management Agency with a building adjacent to the Command Readiness Center at 645 New London Avenue in Cranston.

Under the agency's plan, the Emergency Operations Center would provide a central location for the coordination of state agencies, local governments, Red Cross, and the media. Federal funds will support 50 percent of the feasibility study for design cost. This facility will also house the E-911 Emergency Telephone System alternate public safety answering point.

**800 Megahertz Statewide Radio Communication System:** An approximate $33 million is required to fully fund the current project to its completion by FY 2008. Approximately one third of the system back bone is completed with approximately one third scheduled for completion by the end of FY 2006.

**Military Construction**: The 19 facilities and installations of the Rhode Island National Guard serve as multi-function centers for military training, staging areas for equipment and personnel, and emergency temporary shelters. The Rhode Island National Guard has begun an aggressive program to repair, upgrade and replace structures and facilities to meet the needs of a modern future and forward thinking organization. The facilities and installations are the cornerstone for military readiness to respond to State and Federal missions. Continued Congressional support for funding is needed to accelerate military construction projects, ensuring readiness for full spectrum operation.

**Military Equipment**: The Global War on Terrorism has been hard on the Rhode Island National Guard's equipment. Equipment to support training, war fighting and State emergency capability is degraded by three factors. The first being that the National Guard was resourced at C3 prior to 9-11, leaving it short of full Tables of Equipment allowances. Secondly, the National Guard was not fully modernized with the latest technology of equipment and was authorized non-compatible substitutions. Thirdly, equipment from National Guard units deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan have been required to leave equipment behind in theater. The result is an equipment shortfall in the millions of dollars that degrades the ability to train, deploy for war fighting, and respond to State wide disasters.

**Manpower**: The Rhode Island State Area Command requires additional manpower to sustain the increased operational tempo for all hazards, full spectrum operation. The Rhode Island National Guard is funded to staff full time manning at approximately 45%. An increase in Technician and Title 32 staffing is needed to support operational tempo demands. Increased demands by Federal agencies for planning, preparation and exercises necessitate the need for State Active Duty augmentation. The Stafford Act limits The Adjutant General's ability to augment with State Active Duty personnel until a disaster is declared. Federal funding under the Stafford Act to support personnel augmentation during the planning and preparation phases of an anticipated State wide emergency is needed.

Strategic Outlook

The Rhode Island State Area Command comprised of the National Guard and the Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency will be an Army, Air Force and Emergency Management Agency structured, equipped and trained for full spectrum contingencies to support both the State and Federal missions. The agency will be prepared to focus all of its assets and capabilities for joint, multi-agency, and multi-jurisdiction operations in an "all hazard" environment. The strategic objectives of the agency are:

***Strategy-EM1: Establish the Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency as the Coordinating Agency for State-wide Emergency Management.***

**Objective:** Elevate the Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency as the single coordinating agency for all multi-agency and multi-jurisdiction incidents within the State.

**Objective:** Establish a unified State-Joint Operation Center.

***Strategy-EM2: Establish a "Network Centric" approach to all hazard incident response coordination for consequence management.***

**Objective:** Establish communication protocols following the organizational construct within the Incident Command System.

**Objective:** Secure the Information Technology (IT) bridge to support the network for voice, digital, and video capabilities.

**Objective:** Establish the Information Technology (IT) architecture to support the continuity of government (COG) from a primary and alternate location.

**Objective:** Establish a common operating picture (COOP) for tactical, operational, and strategic levels of organization, using IT and data management processes.

***Strategy-EM3: Achieve All Hazard operational command and control.***

**Objective**: Achieve 80% plans and preparation for the most likely and immediate State-wide hazards.

**Objective:** Train all agencies for response and recovery through a progression of table-top and field exercises.

**Objective:** Secure Federal funding and programs for response agency training, planning, and preparation.

**Objective:** Ensure the National Incident Management System (NIMS) is fully implemented.

***Strategy-EM4: Establish a state-of-the-art Emergency Operation Center facility.***

**Objective:** Secure Federal funds and matching State and local funds to construct a multi-agency facility, designed for 24/7 and extended periods of operation.

**Objective:** Secure a redundant IT backbone for data and voice communication.

***Strategy-MIL1: Recruit and Retain Soldiers and Airmen to meet or exceed the State's end strength goal.***

**Objective:** Develop a way ahead that ensures a total Army end strength of 2150 Soldiers.

**Objective:** Develop a way ahead that ensures a total Air end strength of 1850 Airmen.

***Strategy-MIL2: Focus State and National support for Army and Air mobilization and deployments in support of full spectrum operations.***

**Objective:** Train and equip Soldiers and Airmen for the war fight.

**Objective:** Secure and coordinate Family Support, Employer Support (ESGR), Chaplain Services, Veteran's Services, State and Federal legislation for Soldiers, Airmen, Civil Servants, families, and employers.

**Objective:** Resource Unit Status Report readiness to a goal of C1, modernizing the force and accepting no authorized equipment substitutions and focusing on 100% DMOSQ.

***Strategy-MIL3: Secure Army and Air force structure that ensures full spectrum capability for the Federal and State missions.***

**Objective:** Retain structure supported by demographics for end strength.

**Objective:** Retain a balanced mix of combat and combat service support structure.

**Objective:** Support Air Force multi-compo Transport Wing structure initiative.

**Objective:** Develop a position of influence for Rhode Island force structure needs based on end strength dominance instead of accepting service directed alternatives.

***Strategy-MIL4: Aggressively secure Federal military construction (MILCON) funding to repair, replace and upgrade military installations and facilities.***

**Objective:** Develop a near term and long range construction improvement program for all installations and facilities.

**Objective:** Secure matching State and local government matching funds to take advantage of Federal fund availability.

The Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency

The Rhode Island Emergency Management (RIEMA) is the coordinating agency for multi-jurisdiction and multi-agency response in the State of Rhode Island for all emergencies including natural and technological hazards such as fires, floods, tornadoes, hurricanes, winter storms, chemical releases, weapons of mass destruction and terrorism incidents. Agency services include:

- Develop, review and enhance the State's disaster preparedness and recovery plans for "All Hazards"
- Distribute and coordinate those plans on a State-wide basis
- Operate, maintain and enhance the State's Emergency Operations Center (EOC)
- Operate, maintain and enhance the State's Mobile Command Center.
- Manage and coordinate state-wide response to and recovery from natural, technological, and terrorism disasters.
- Coordinate the State's disaster response/recovery needs with Federal agencies.
- Serve as a coordination point for federal disaster relief programs
- Plan, conduct and critique exercises that test and improve preparedness
- Develop, distribute and provide instruction on guidelines for citizen, business and industrial disaster planning.

The Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency assists and supports the State in reducing loss of life and property from all hazards, providing for the safety and security of the State of Rhode Island.

The Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency is the official coordinating agency of the State of Rhode Island for the Department of Homeland Security and the Federal Emergency Management Agency in times of state, national, multi-jurisdiction and multi-agency emergencies/disasters. The State's disaster preparedness plans are constantly being reviewed, assessed, updated and tested. Our mission is the protection and safety of the lives and property of the citizens and visitors of Rhode Island.

Although the Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency provides for disaster response and recovery for the entire State, local governments, including individual cities and municipalities, and fire/law enforcement districts must develop their own Emergency Disaster Plans in concert with the State and Federal Response Plans.

Emergency planning, preparation, response, operation, and recovery in the State of Rhode Island is a collaborative multi-jurisdiction and multi-agency effort, including transportation,

emergency medical services, law enforcement, fire services, engineers, the private sector, the National Guard, and Coast Guard, to name a few.

The Rhode Island National Guard

The Rhode Island Army National Guard maintains 16 armories, and is present in 13 communities. The Rhode Island Army National Guard traces its history from the first colonial defensive force established in the town of Portsmouth, Rhode Island in 1638. This group of citizen soldiers consisted of two sergeants, two corporals, and one clerk. From this humble beginning the State's military grew, providing forces in many conflicts during the pre-revolutionary period, the Revolutionary War, the War of 1812, the Civil War, the Spanish American War, the Mexican Border, World War I, World War II, Korea, Vietnam, Desert Storm, Stabilization Forces (SFOR) in the Balkans, and most recently Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom.

Today, the Rhode Island Army National Guard consists of a force of over 4,000 dedicated men and women, who are prepared to serve our State or Nation in a variety of military specialties. Rhode Island has citizen Soldiers and Airmen qualified in military occupational specialties which include Artillery, Infantry, Signal, Engineer, Aviation, and Military Police. Since 11 September 2001, over 3,200 Rhode Island National Guardsmen have been activated and deployed out of the state in support of the Global War on Terrorism. They have additionally responded to assist in Hurricane Katrina.

The Joint Force Headquarters, Rhode Island National Guard (RING) provides command and control of the major elements of the Rhode Island National Guard, the 56th Troop Command, 103rd Field Artillery Brigade, 43rd Military Police Brigade, 143rd Airlift Wing, 281st Combat Communications Group, 102nd Information Warfare Squadron, Special Operations Detachment G, and the RING Medical Command. Additionally, the Joint Force Headquarters is capable of providing command and control for any Joint Task Forces which may be formed in the state during emergency situations.

The JFHQ-RI is comprised of four (4) main areas; a Command Group, a Personal Staff Group, a Coordinating Staff Group, and a Special Staff Group. In addition, the Headquarters Detachment, JFHQ, provides administrative support to the soldiers assigned to the command elements.

The Rhode Island National Guard has two missions. The Federal Mission, at the direction of the President of the United States is to:

- Support US military strategy
- Train and prepare for war
- Promote stability and thwart aggression
- Supplement active forces in Operations Other than War

The State Mission, at the direction of the Governor of the State of Rhode Island is to:

- Protect life and property
- Preserve peace and order
- Provide military support to civil authority

Conclusion

The Adjutant General, with the full resources of the Rhode Island National Guard and the Emergency Management Agency, must ensure that plans, preparation, response and recovery for the full spectrum of hazards are accomplished to support both State and Federal missions and contingencies.

Together with our local State and Federal crisis and consequence management agencies; the Rhode Island Military Staff under the Adjutant General are responsible for the safety and security of Rhode Island. The Rhode Island Military Staff will accomplish this through a network centric approach as the coordinating agency for multi-agency and multi-jurisdiction incident management. The Rhode Island Military Staff will pursue its strategic objectives toward full spectrum inter-agency capability.

ROBERT T. BRAY
Major General, RING
The Adjutant General
State of Rhode Island

**Executive Summary of Probability of Northeast Hurricane 2006**

Prepared by Amy Grzybowski
Homeland Security Grant Manager
RIEMA

The northeast region of the United States experienced its worst hurricane in 1938, in what was named the "Long Island Express." This hurricane ravaged through Long Island and then struck Providence, Rhode Island, killing over 600 people in its path. The devastation totaled more than $306 million which, "when adjusted for inflation, would total nearly $6 billion today" (AccuWeather). This hurricane left Providence 10 to 15 feet underwater. However, today, because of the dam that was built in Providence to avoid a repeat incidence, a hurricane of that magnitude would cause much of the smaller towns within Rhode Island to experience a similar fate with more devastation than in 1938.

History and research suggest that hurricane patterns, as well as other weather phenomena, are cyclical. According to Chief Forecaster of the AccuWeather.com Hurricane Center on March 20, 2006, "the weather patterns and hydrology we're seeing in the oceans" and the "above-normal water-temperatures are reminiscent of the pattern that eventually produced the 1938 hurricane that struck Providence." This storm produced maximum gusts of 186 mph, a 15 to 20 foot storm surge, and 25 to 50 foot waves.

According to National Geographic researcher Willie Drye "meteorologists have noted that hurricane seasons run in alternating cycles of active and less active seasons. These cycles last from 25 to 40 years" (Drye). The active seasons are though to occur because of salt in the ocean water. When there is more salt in the water the water is warmer, and leaves for a higher incidence of hurricanes. It is believed by meteorologists that the cycle of active seasons started in 1995 and could continue for another 15 to 30 years (Drye). The warmer water allows the hurricane to produce and retain immense power.

Hurricanes that make landfall in the Northeast usually form near the Cape Verde Islands. They then approach the Bahamas and are then sent northward if they are fast-moving and powerful. The faster they move over water the more power they retain. "The biggest impacts for the Northeast are the storms that are moving at 30 to 40 miles an hour as they come out of the lower latitudes" (Drye).

Dr. Philip Klotzbach and Dr. William Gray from the Department of Atmospheric Science at Colorado State University, have been making hurricane forecasts for 22 years. As of April 4, 2006, for the 2006 hurricane season they are predicting 9 hurricanes in the Atlantic Basin, 5 of which are going to be intense hurricanes (Category 3 or above). They predict that there will be a total of 45 hurricane days throughout these storms. It is predicted that the east coast has a 64% probability of getting a Category 3-4-5 in the upcoming season. To make their predictions they utilized 52 years of past global reanalysis data and their analog forecast. Their full report scientifically explains their analysis and predictions.

Many people feel that the higher incidence of hurricane activity is directly related to global warming, however Klotzbach and Gray feel that "this large increase in Atlantic major hurricanes is primarily a result of a multi-decadal increase in strength in the Atlantic Ocean thermohaline circulation (THC) which is not directly related to global temperature increase." Klotzbach and Gray do insert a disclaimer in their report that states that sometimes their predictions could fail and that it is not easy to ascertain where on the Atlantic Basin their hurricanes may hit landfall and they also feel this year may produce a lower incidence of hurricanes that actually hit land than last year. Dr. Klotzbach and Dr. Gray will give their next seasonal update on May 31, 2006. The National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration will publicly present their predictions on May 15, 2006.

**Prepared Statement of John E. Chartier**

**Fire Chief and Emergency Management Director**

**City of Warwick**

**April 20, 2006**

Good Morning Senators:

First, I would like to thank you for your work in support of all first responders involved in both homeland security and emergency management and for allowing me the opportunity to meet with you this morning. I would like to address a few issues that have relevance here in Rhode Island.

As we approach the 2006 hurricane season, we do so with a renewed sense of commitment, and urgency. I just returned from the National Hurricane Conference in Orlando, during which I had the opportunity to gain valued information on hurricane response and preparedness. The lessons learned from our colleagues in Florida and the Gulf States must be learned and changes made in order that we can all respond in a coordinated manner to effectively serve our citizens.

We at the local level understand that local and county governments must take the lead in emergency response. Local government must be prepared to work through our State agencies with FEMA in coordinating the federal government's role in order that this approach is conducted in a team fashion.

In order for this to happen all parties must understand the "chain of command" for all responders in response to natural disasters. During my training at the National Hurricane Conference it became quite apparent that from region to region this chain of command is not consistent. While most agencies, have adopted the National Incident Management System (NIMS), to conduct operations during emergency and disaster response, the chain of command varies greatly by region. I feel that a national standard should be adopted in order that all regions conduct operations in a similar manner. By doing so would allow greater understanding between operating agencies as to where they fit into the process, particularly when federal agencies and assets are deployed in support of operations.

**Communications**

It is my understanding that FEMA's National Response Coordination Center (NRCC) - is upgrading equipment and installing software to improve the interface, coordination, and exchange of information with the Department of Homeland Security Operations Center (HSOC).

These improvements to information systems, will improve coordination, rapid exchange of information, and access to field reports before, during and after a disaster and are sorely needed. However while these changes are taking place at the Federal level, those of us at the local level are still struggling with the dire need for interoperable communications. Interoperable communications capabilities must be developed at the local level in order that emergency response officials can effectively communicate during a disaster. This type of communications system is extremely costly for any local municipality to develop on it own. I would ask that more support by given to funding

sources that would allow local and state government to develop and maintain this vital equipment. As demonstrated during the recent response to Katrina, effective communications is vital to the success of any response.

**Emergency Operations Centers**

Essential for the effective response of any community to a disaster is its ability to staff, operate and maintain an adequate Emergency Operations Center. I would ask congress to support funding designed to allow every region to develop a center that meets the needs of the area. In Warwick we are presently working on improvements in this area, but more Federal support is needed if we are to truly build an asset that meets the needs of the region. These centers need to be established in a manner that is consistent with the chain of command that I mentioned earlier. I believe that FEMA in conjunction with our State counterparts should review present centers and insure that they meet regional needs. While attending last week conference it became quite apparent that the southern states seem to have developed these centers to a greater level than many of us in the northeast. I am sure that much of this has progress has unfortunately been driven by the frequency of hurricanes in that area in recent years, but we must develop and maintain similar facilities in all areas of the country if we to be truly prepared.

**Shelters and Supply**

We have been working hard in developing adequate shelters for our community. This effort has been successful with the cooperation of the Red Cross and out local CERT Teams. However a concern to us is the ability to replenish and restock essential disaster commodities such as food, water, ice, fuel, during a hurricane aftermath. It is extremely important that FEMA have a ready supply of needed commodities and assets for surge capability beyond FEMA's "on hand" capacity.

**Agency Focus**

During the period following September 11... we have seen the focus of available funding for emergency management and response shift to terrorism and weapons of mass destruction as opposed to response to and recovery from natural disasters. For example, during the last couple of years we have seen tremendous DHS support of our hazardous materials and decontamination teams while other areas received very little. While attention to issues involving terrorism is vitally important and necessary, it must be noted that we should also be giving equal funding support to issues involving hurricane preparedness and response as well. During the course of last weeks conference there was considerable discussion regarding the inclusion of FEMA under the Department of Homeland Security. I believe that congress should give this issue careful consideration and insure that if FEMA continues to remain part of DHS that it does not become lost within that organization and that its ability to focus on and respond to disasters efficiently is assured.

**Reimbursement**

The response to Katrina involved mutual for all parts of the country. The Emergency Management Aid Compact (EMAC) was allowed for the efficient deployment of local and state asset with great success. Although these deployments were successful in completion of the mission, many of them were nightmares for local communities who funded these responses, after assurances from state and federal agencies that reimbursement would be forthcoming, only to wait several months for compensation. If congress could streamline the process for reimbursement it would allow greater support of missions in the future.

In conclusion, the role of local government in hurricane response and preparedness must be clearly defined and integrated into any state or federal response. I thank you for the opportunity to appear before you this morning and I will gladly answer any questions you may have.

## MEMORANDUM

To: Senator Lincoln Chafee
From: Kevin Mathis
Date: April 19, 2006
Re: 1954 Hurricane Carol Pictures

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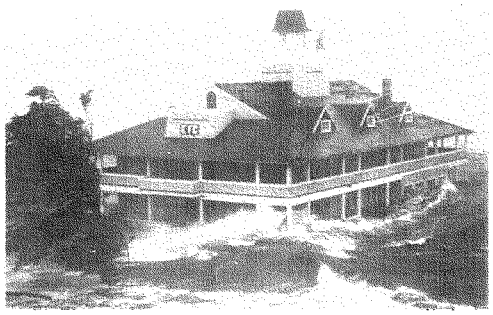
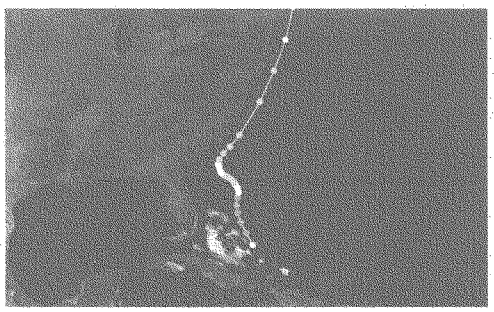
### Edgewood Yacht Club in Cranston

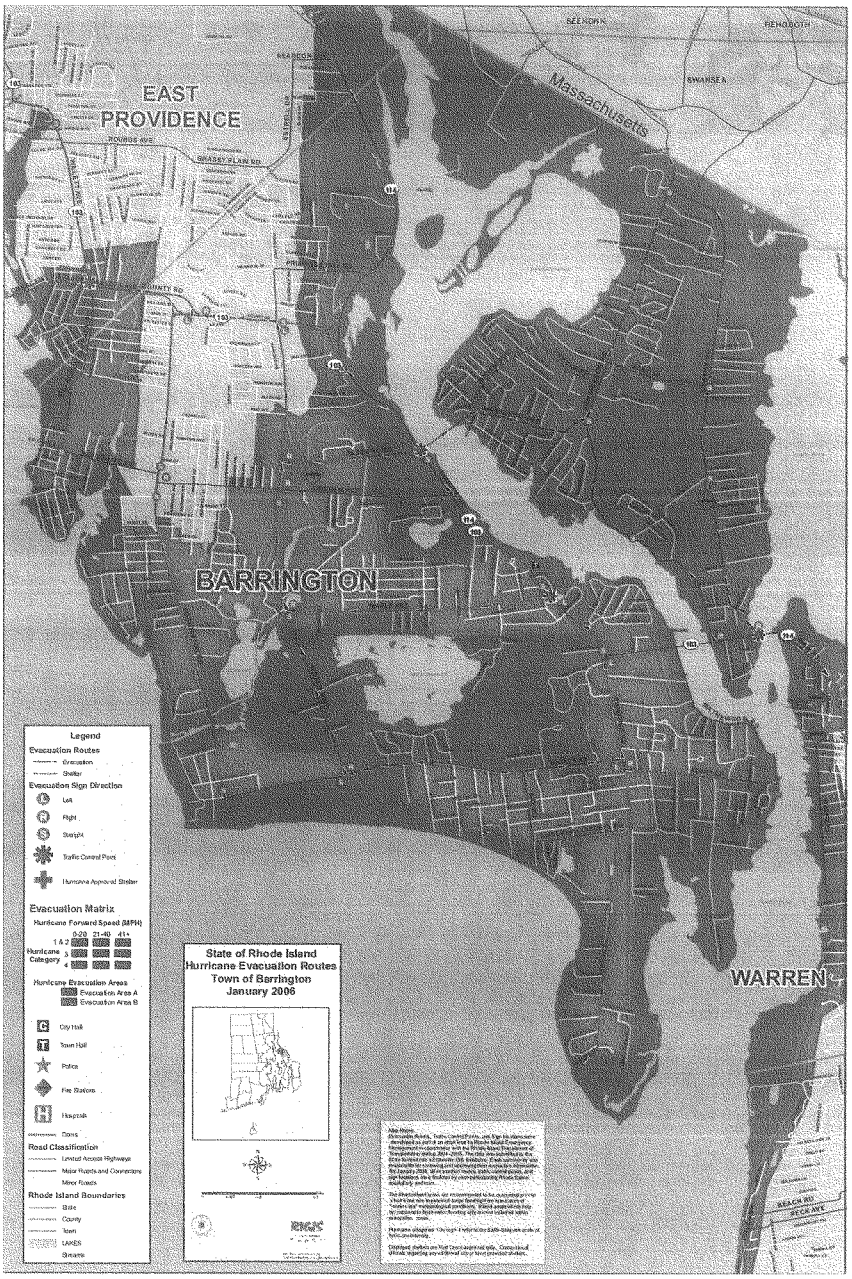


On August 31, 1954, Hurricane Carol struck Rhode Island. She left her path of destruction along Rhode Island's southern coast, north into Narragansett Bay and downtown Providence. The Edgewood Yacht Club in Cranston was submerged by Carol's tidal surge and severely damaged.

### Hurricane Carol Course



Hurricane Carol formed as a tropical storm near the Bahamas. Reaching hurricane strength, Carol briefly made landfall along the Outer Banks of North Carolina before directly striking Long Island. Carol then swept through central New England reaching as far north as Maine before dissipating over Canada.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SWANSEA
State of Rhode Island
Hurricane Evacuation Routes
Town of Barrington
January 2006
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Evacuation Sign Direction
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Hurricane Approved Shelter
Evacuation Matrix
Hurricane Forward Speed (MPH)
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Hurricane Evacuation Areas
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Evacuation Area B
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Hospitals
Dams
Road Classification
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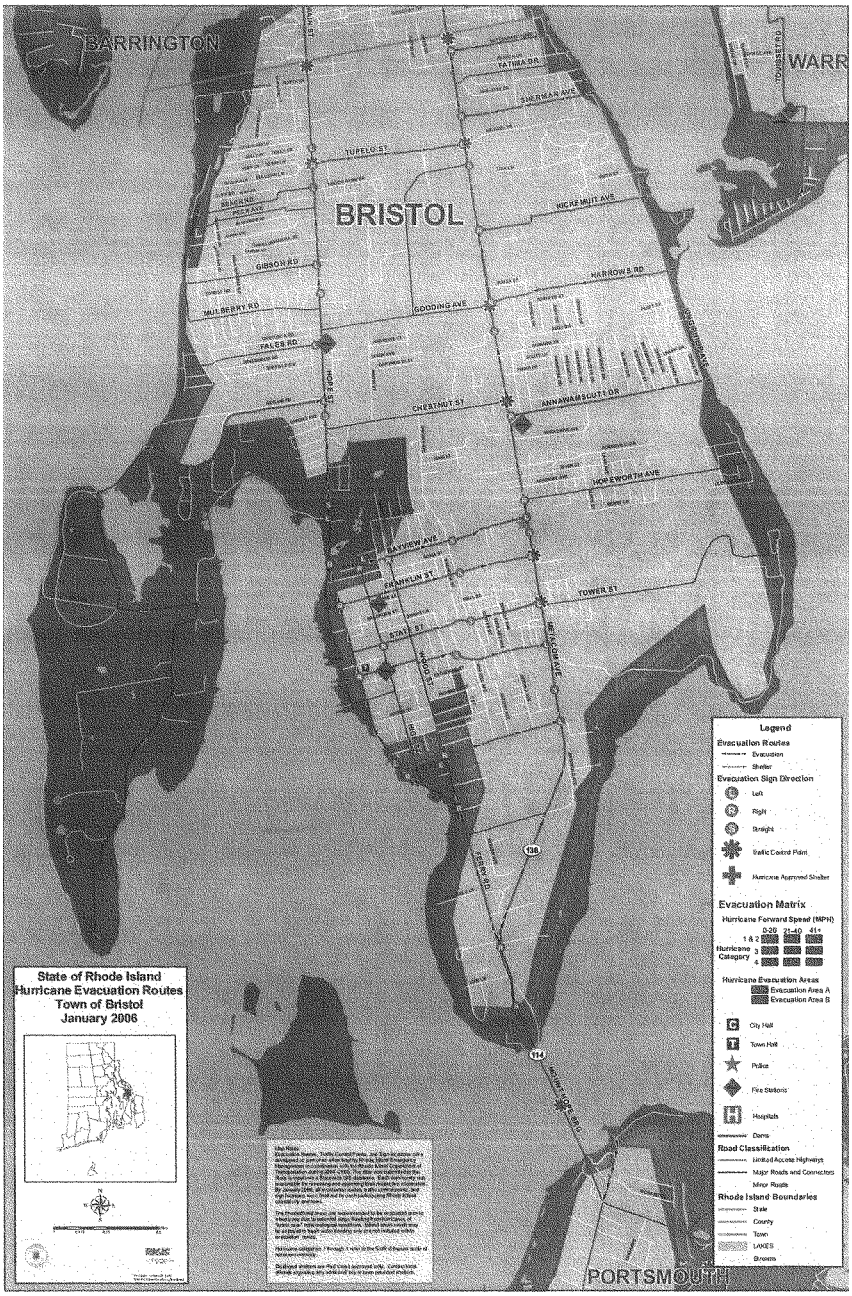
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GODDING AVE
TALES RD
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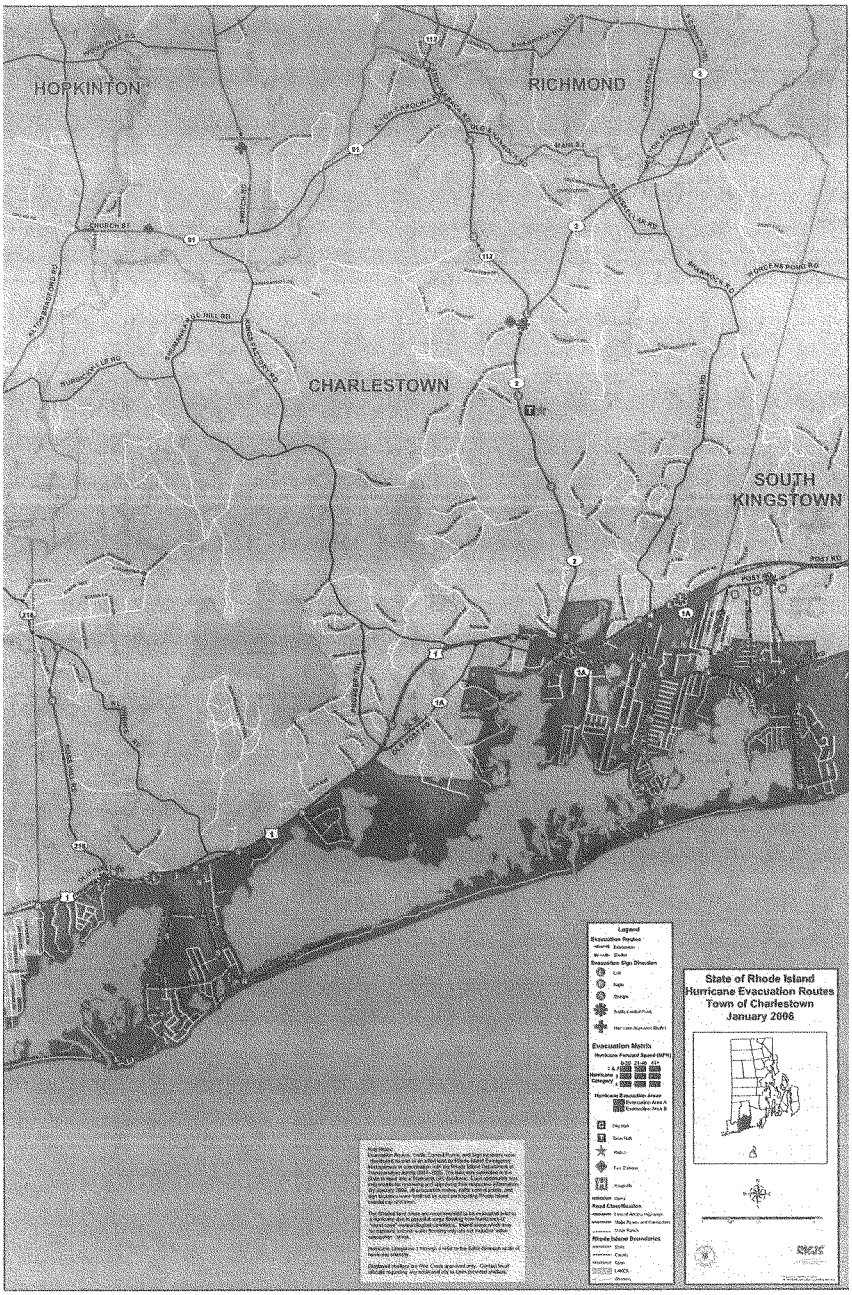
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Hurricane Evacuation Areas
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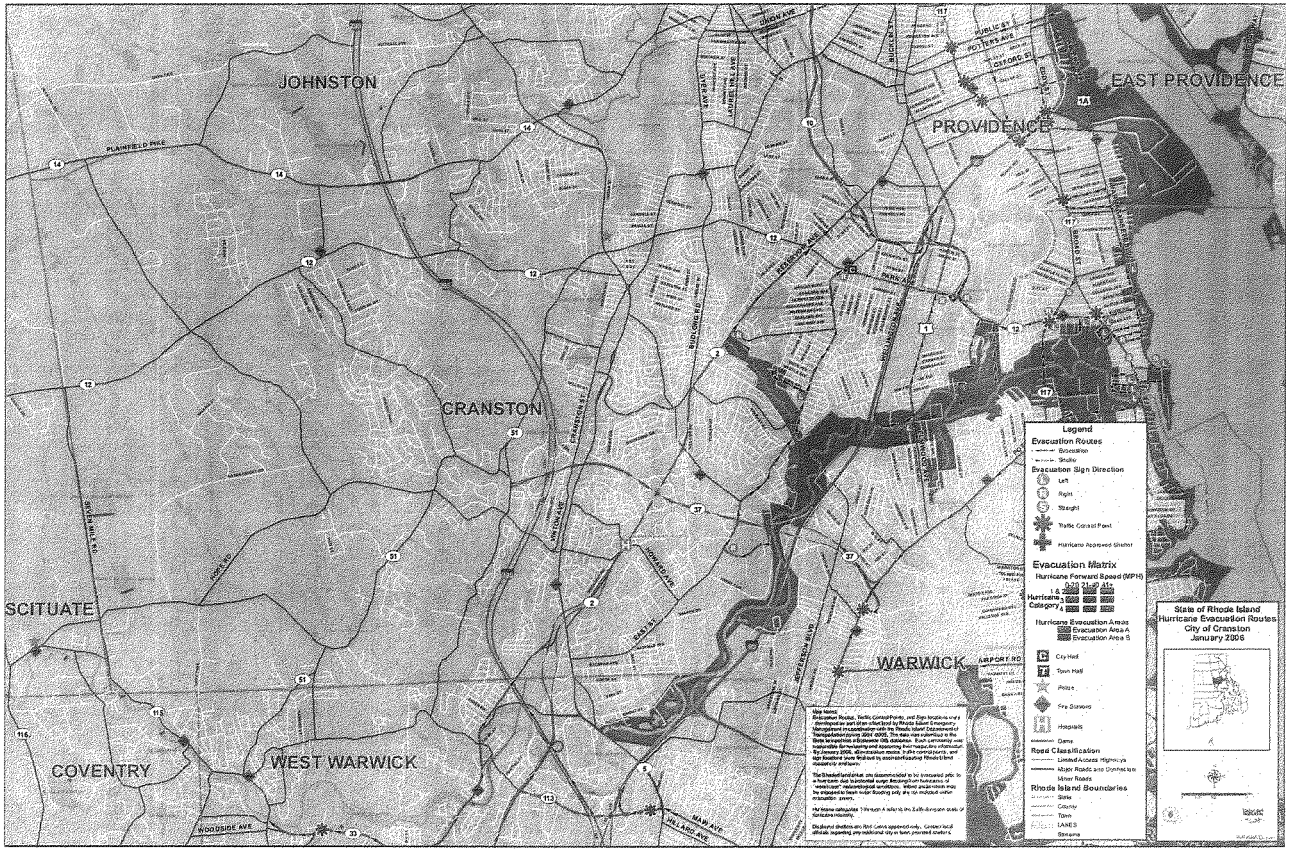
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Hurricane Evacuation Routes
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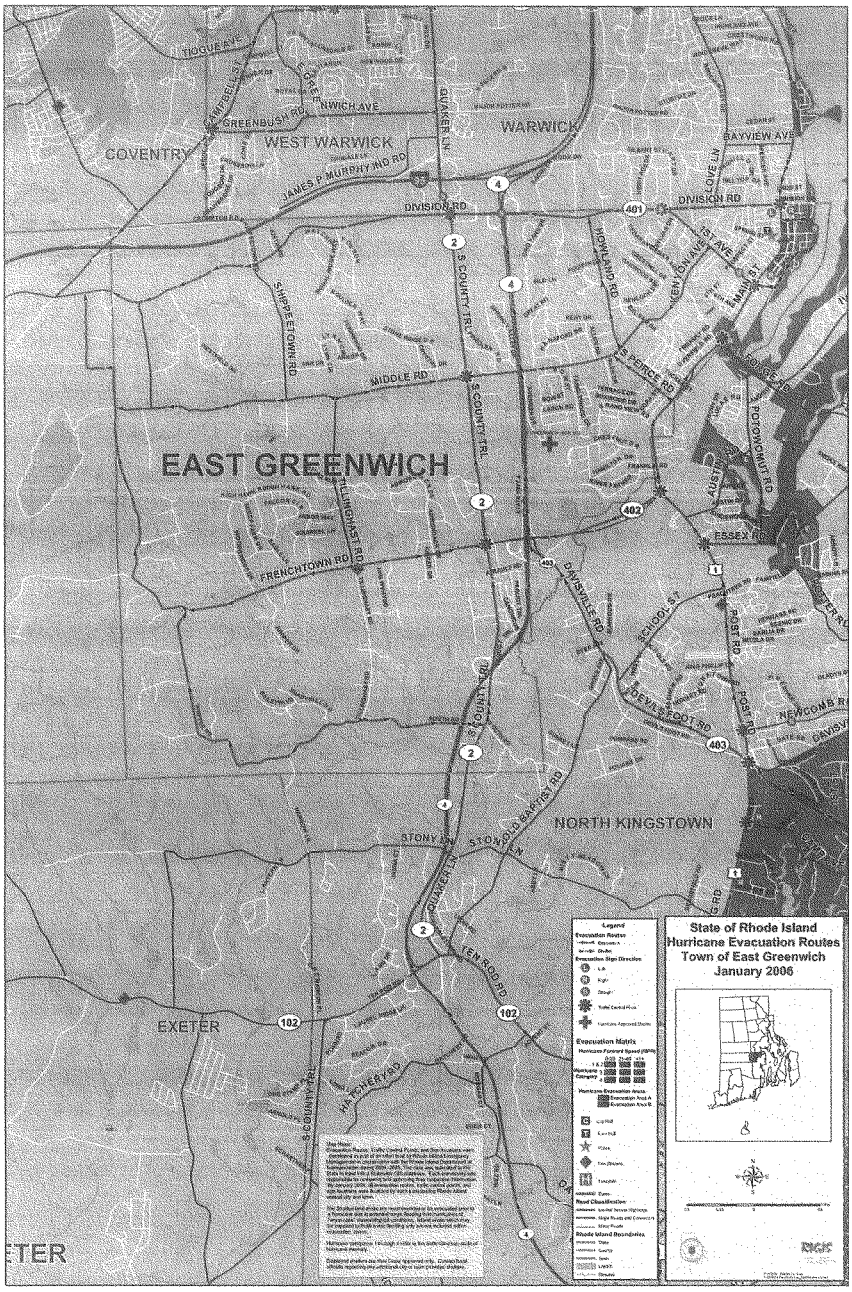
January 2006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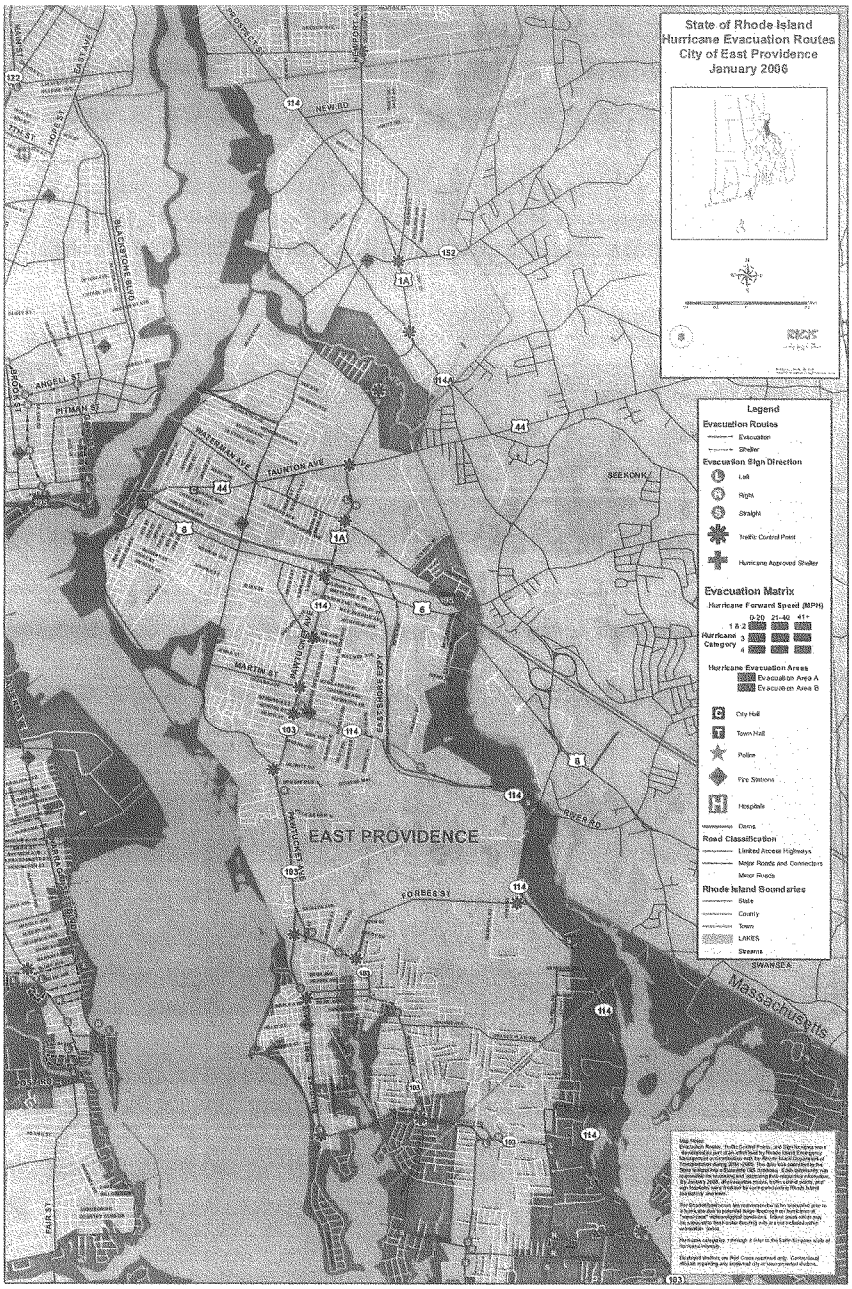
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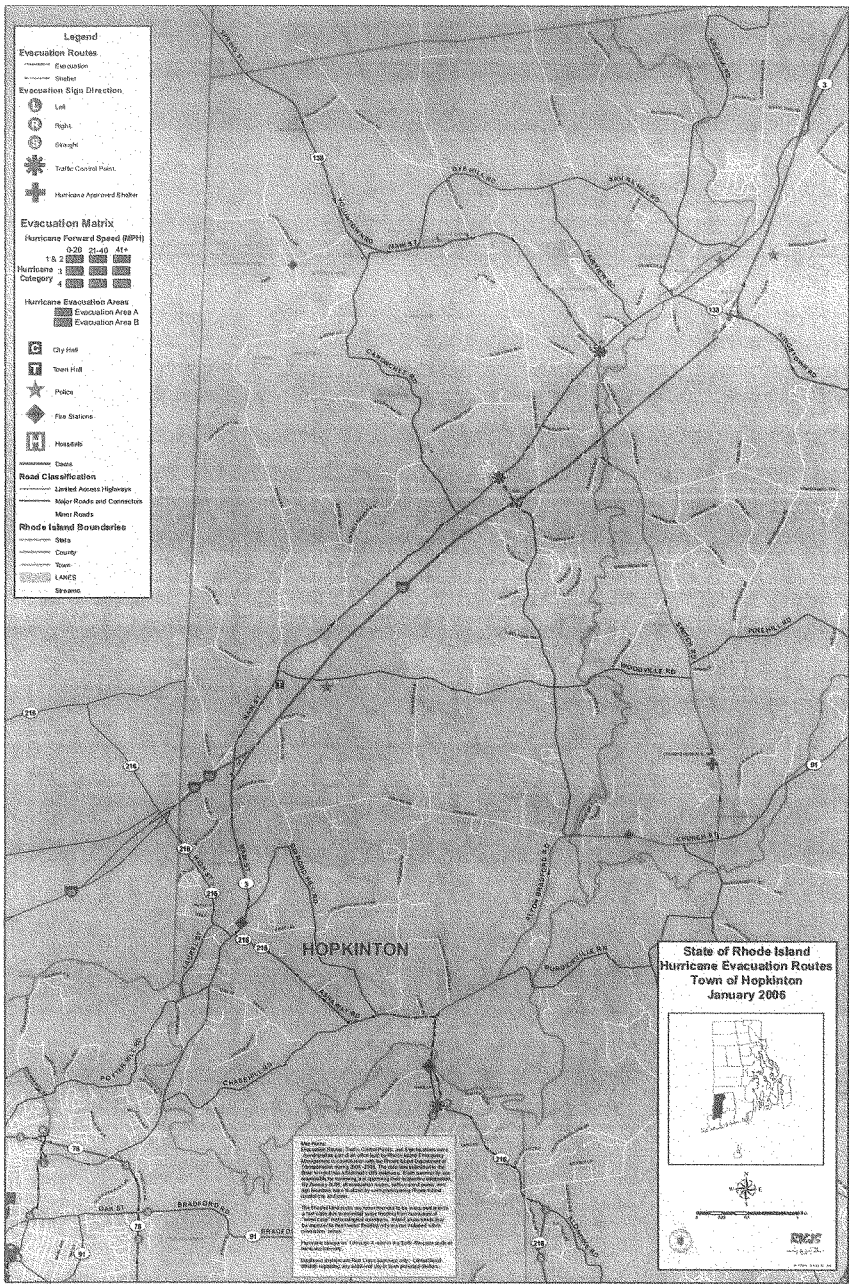
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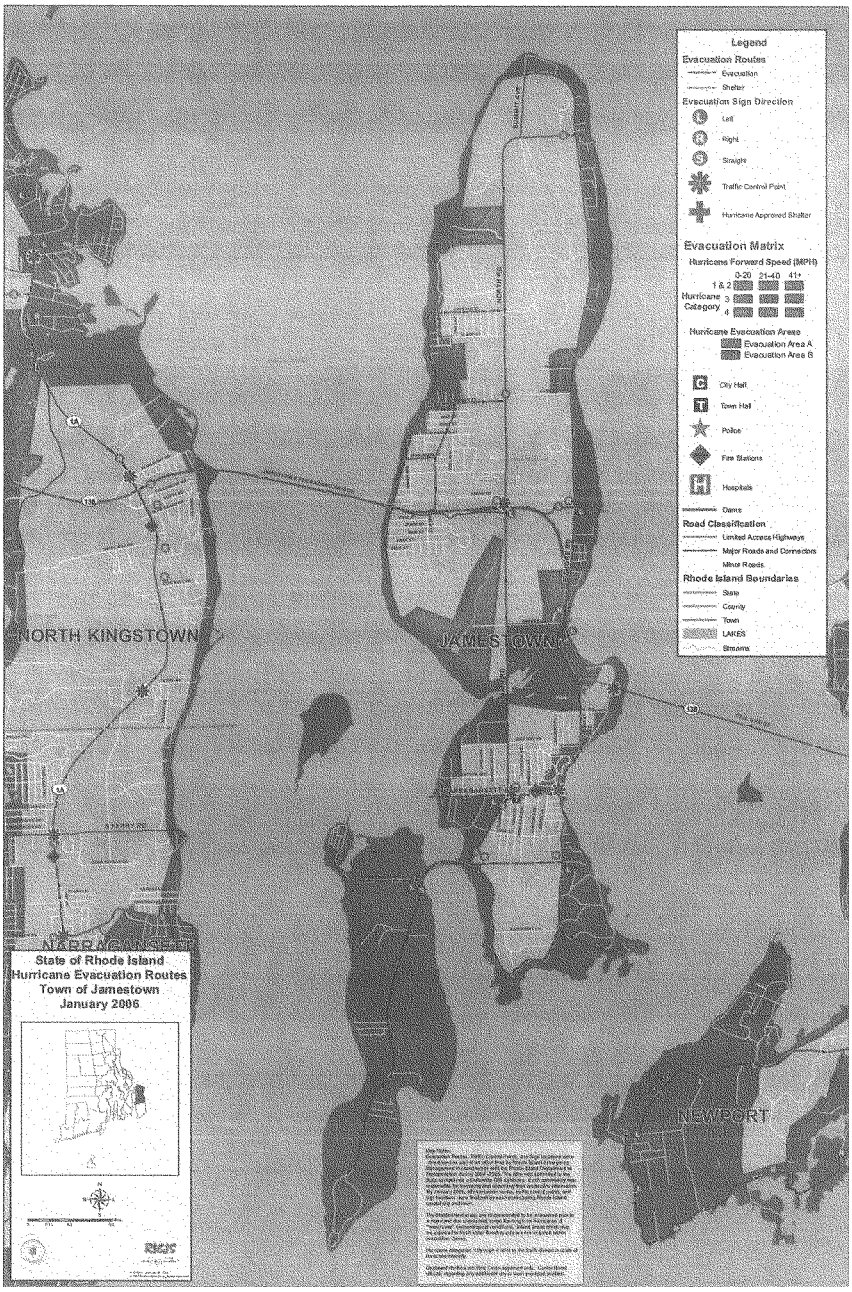
Town of Hopkinton
January 2006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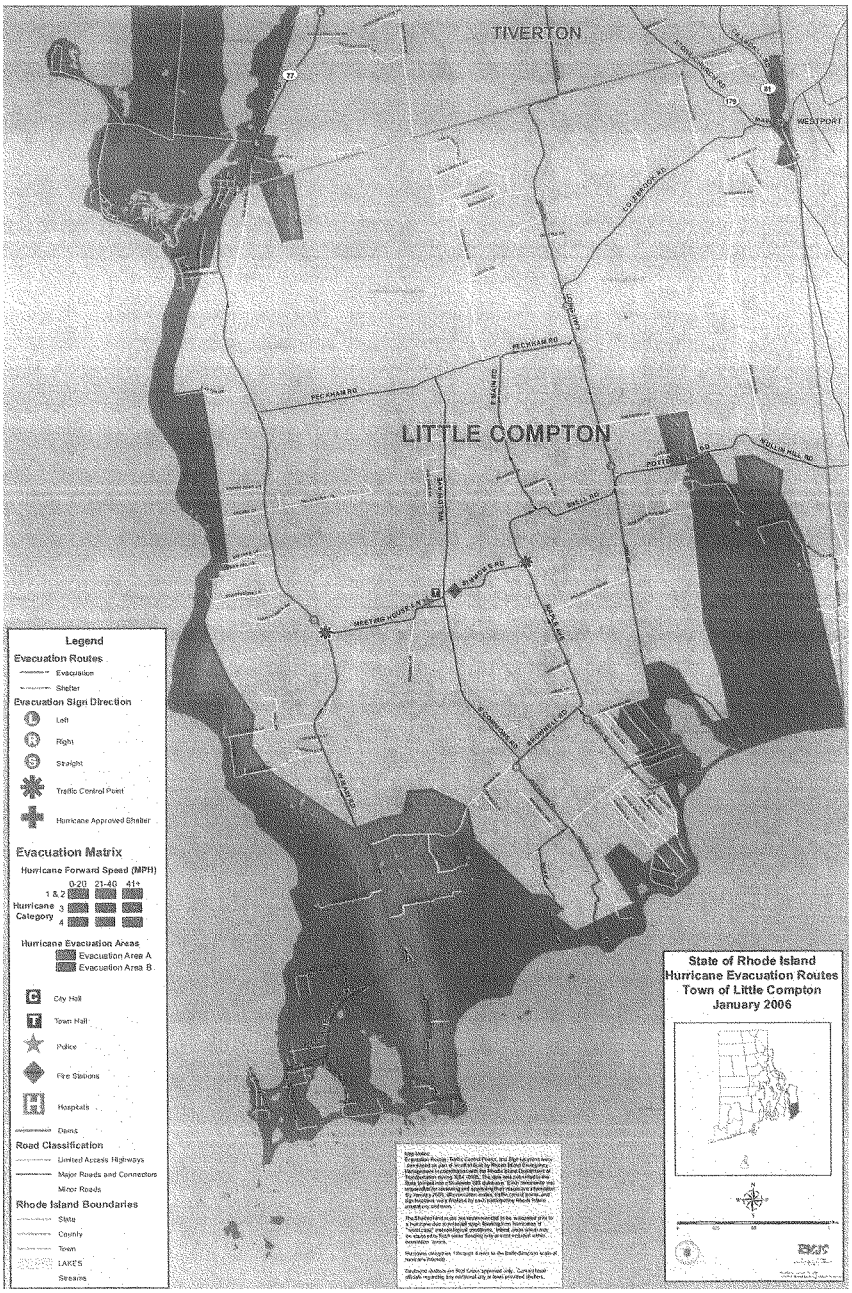
Hurricane Evacuation Routes
Town of Jamestown
January 2006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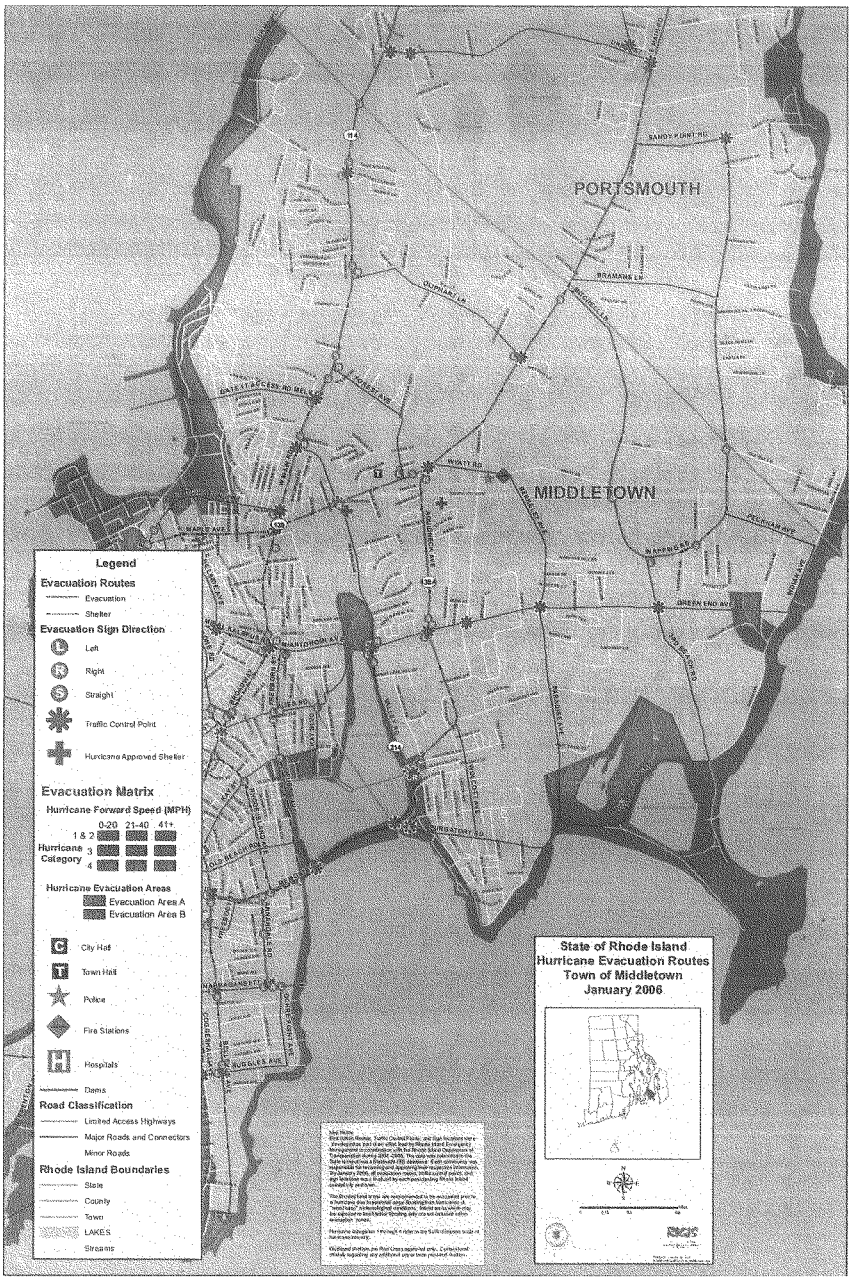
Town of Little Compton
January 2006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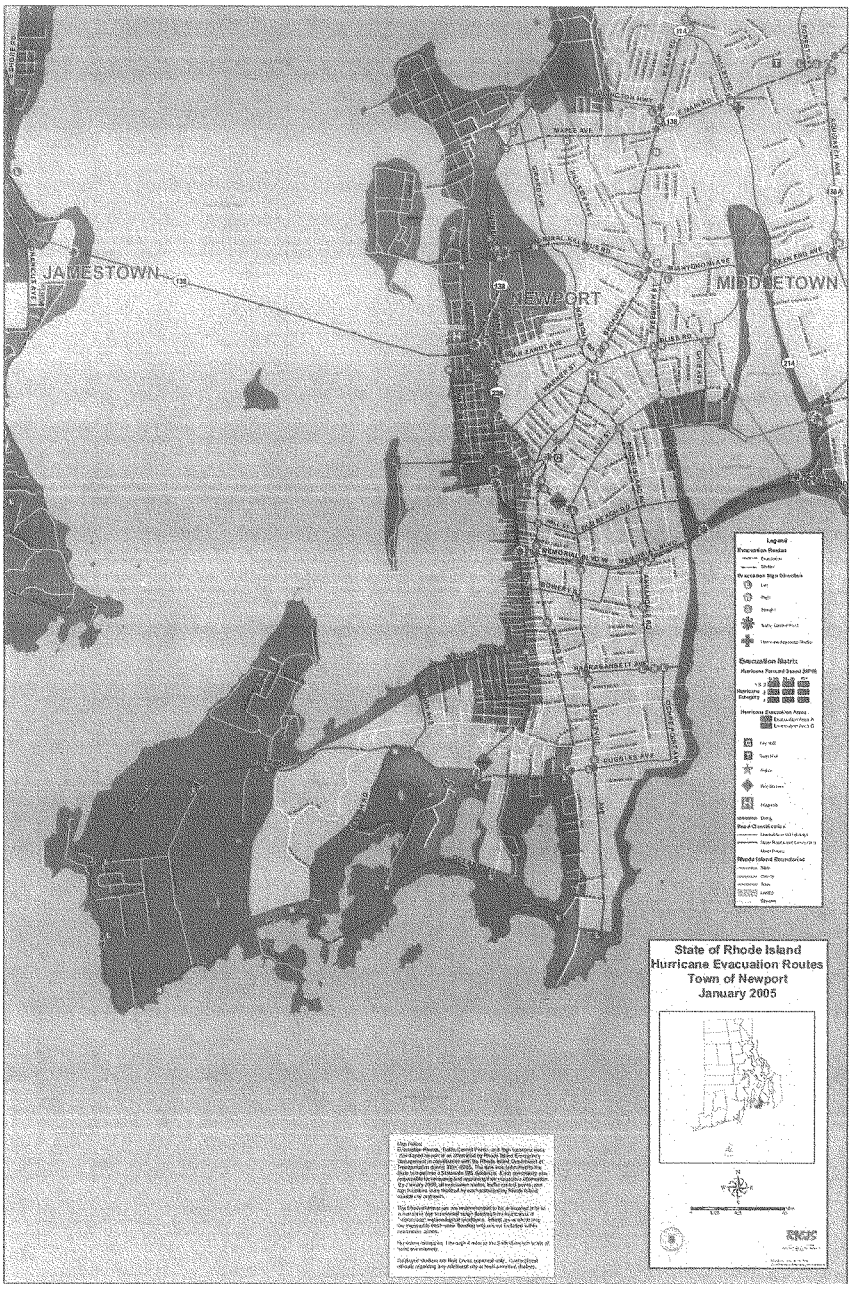
January 2006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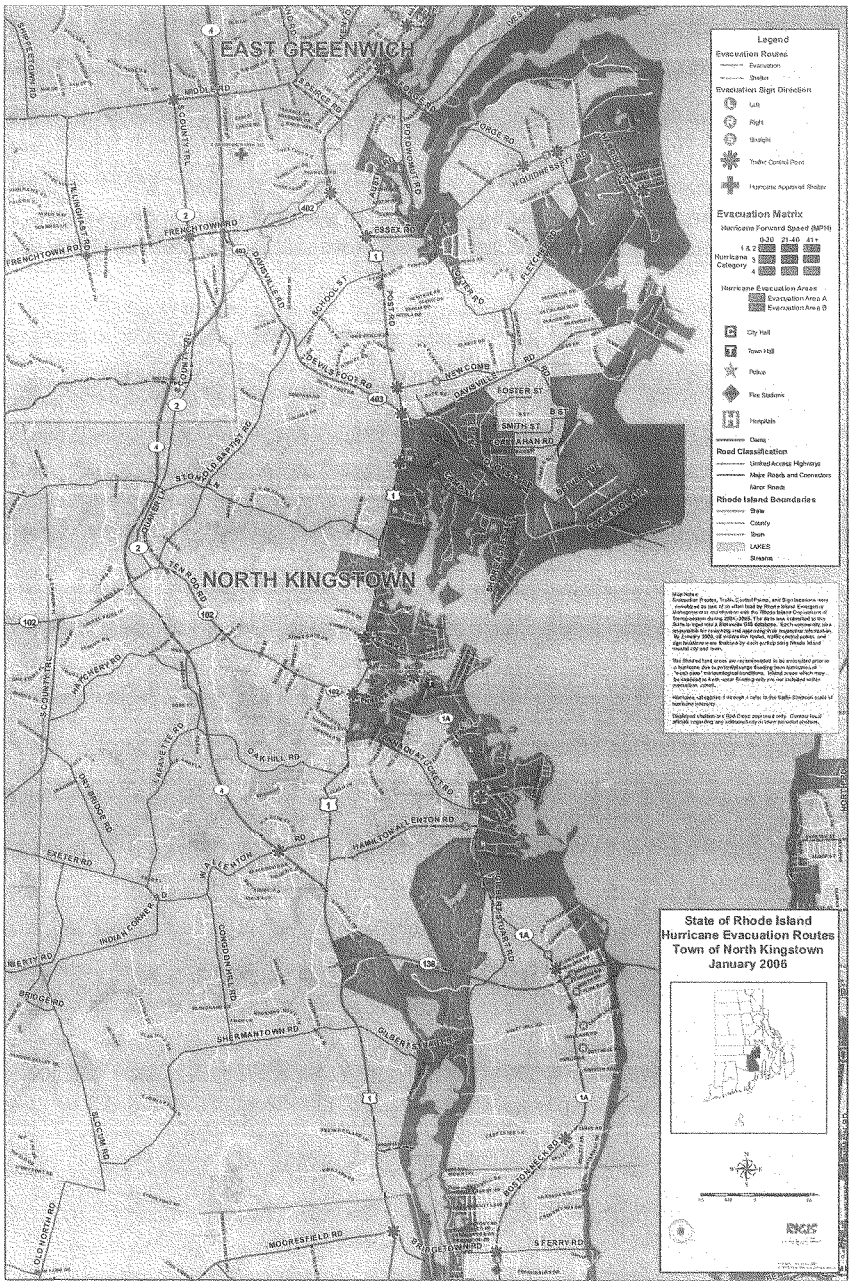
Town of Newport
January 2005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State of Rhode Island
Hurricane Evacuation Routes
Town of North Kingstown
January 2006

State of Rhode Island
Hurricane Evacuation Routes
City of Pawtucket
January 2015
Legend
Evacuation Routes
Evacuation Map Intersection
Evacuation Points
Hospitals
Nursing Homes
Evacuation Marks
Hurricane Evacuation Area
Hurricane Evacuation Area Variants
Evacuation Zone A
Evacuation Zone B
Evacuation Zone C
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Evacuation Zone QU
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Evacuation Zone RM
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Evacuation Zone SD
Evacuation Zone SE
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Evacuation Zone SJ
Evacuation Zone SK
Evacuation Zone SL
Evacuation Zone SM
Evacuation Zone SN
Evacuation Zone SO
Evacuation Zone SP
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Evacuation Zone SS
Evacuation Zone ST
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Evacuation Zone SV
Evacuation Zone SW
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Evacuation Zone TO
Evacuation Zone TP
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Evacuation Zone UM
Evacuation Zone UN
Evacuation Zone UO
Evacuation Zone UP
Evacuation Zone UQ
Evacuation Zone UR
Evacuation Zone US
Evacuation Zone UT
Evacuation Zone UU
Evacuation Zone UV
Evacuation Zone UW
Evacuation Zone UX
Evacuation Zone UY
Evacuation Zone UZ
Evacuation Zone VA
Evacuation Zone VB
Evacuation Zone VC
Evacuation Zone VD
Evacuation Zone VE
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Evacuation Zone WT
Evacuation Zone WU
Evacuation Zone WV
Evacuation Zone WW
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Evacuation Zone WY
Evacuation Zone WZ
Evacuation Zone XA
Evacuation Zone XB
Evacuation Zone XC
Evacuation Zone XD
Evacuation Zone XE
Evacuation Zone XF
Evacuation Zone XG
Evacuation Zone XH
Evacuation Zone XI
Evacuation Zone XJ
Evacuation Zone XK
Evacuation Zone XL
Evacuation Zone XM
Evacuation Zone XN
Evacuation Zone XO
Evacuation Zone XP
Evacuation Zone XQ
Evacuation Zone XR
Evacuation Zone XS
Evacuation Zone XT
Evacuation Zone XU
Evacuation Zone XV
Evacuation Zone XW
Evacuation Zone XX
Evacuation Zone XY
Evacuation Zone XZ
Evacuation Zone YA
Evacuation Zone YB
Evacuation Zone YC
Evacuation Zone YD
Evacuation Zone YE
Evacuation Zone YF
Evacuation Zone YG
Evacuation Zone YH
Evacuation Zone YI
Evacuation Zone YJ
Evacuation Zone YK
Evacuation Zone YL
Evacuation Zone YM
Evacuation Zone YN
Evacuation Zone YO
Evacuation Zone YP
Evacuation Zone YQ
Evacuation Zone YR
Evacuation Zone YS
Evacuation Zone YT
Evacuation Zone YU
Evacuation Zone YV
Evacuation Zone YW
Evacuation Zone YX
Evacuation Zone YY
Evacuation Zone YZ
Evacuation Zone ZA
Evacuation Zone ZB
Evacuation Zone ZC
Evacuation Zone ZD
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Evacuation Zone ZF
Evacuation Zone ZG
Evacuation Zone ZH
Evacuation Zone ZI
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Evacuation Zone ZT
Evacuation Zone ZU
Evacuation Zone ZV
Evacuation Zone ZW
Evacuation Zone ZX
Evacuation Zone ZY
Evacuation Zone ZZ
Evacuation Zone AA
Evacuation Zone AB
Evacuation Zone AC
Evacuation Zone AD
Evacuation Zone AE
Evacuation Zone AF
Evacuation Zone AG
Evacuation Zone AH
Evacuation Zone AI
Evacuation Zone AJ
Evacuation Zone AK
Evacuation Zone AL
Evacuation Zone AM
Evacuation Zone AN
Evacuation Zone AO
Evacuation Zone AP
Evacuation Zone AQ
Evacuation Zone AR
Evacuation Zone AS
Evacuation Zone AT
Evacuation Zone AU
Evacuation Zone AV
Evacuation Zone AW
Evacuation Zone AX
Evacuation Zone AY
Evacuation Zone AZ
Evacuation Zone BA
Evacuation Zone BB
Evacuation Zone BC
Evacuation Zone BD
Evacuation Zone BE
Evacuation Zone BF
Evacuation Zone BG
Evacuation Zone BH
Evacuation Zone BI
Evacuation Zone BJ
Evacuation Zone BK
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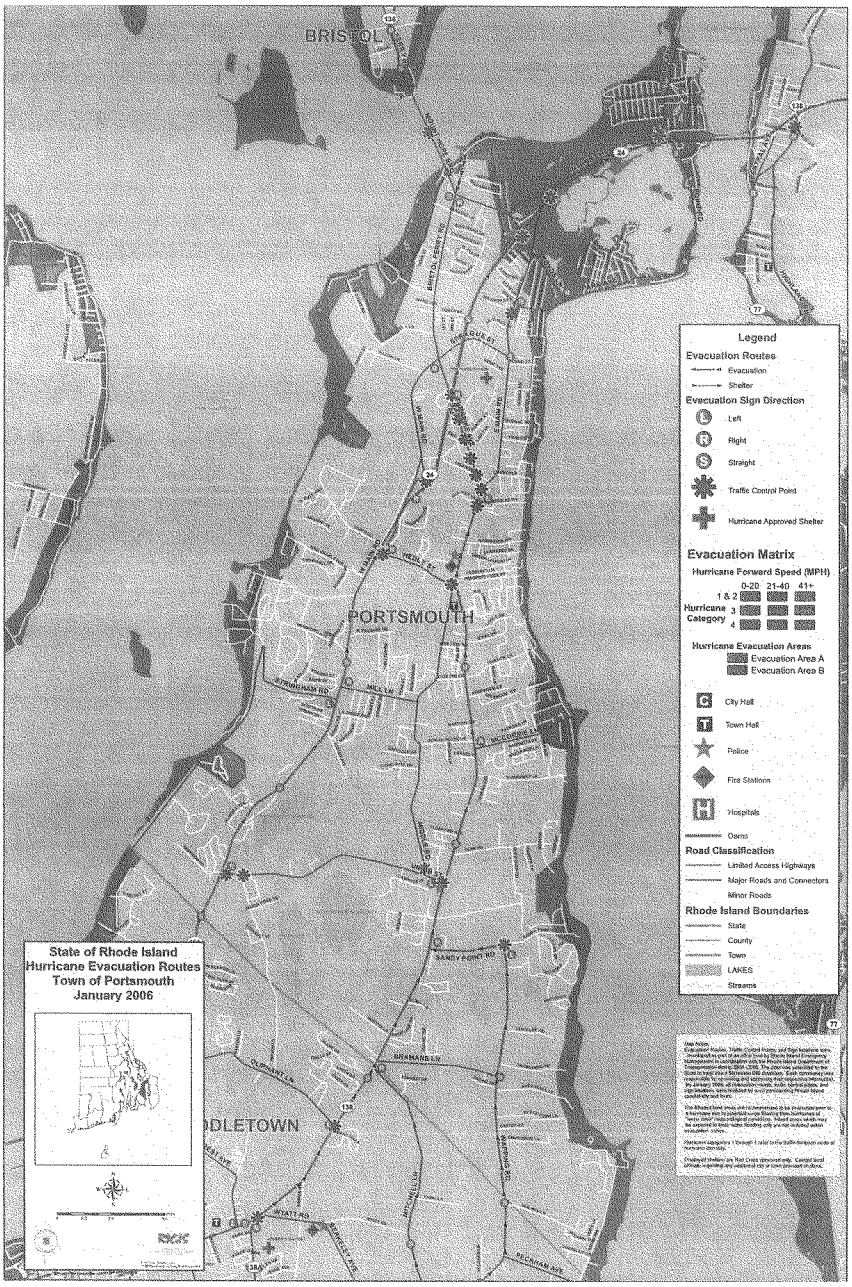
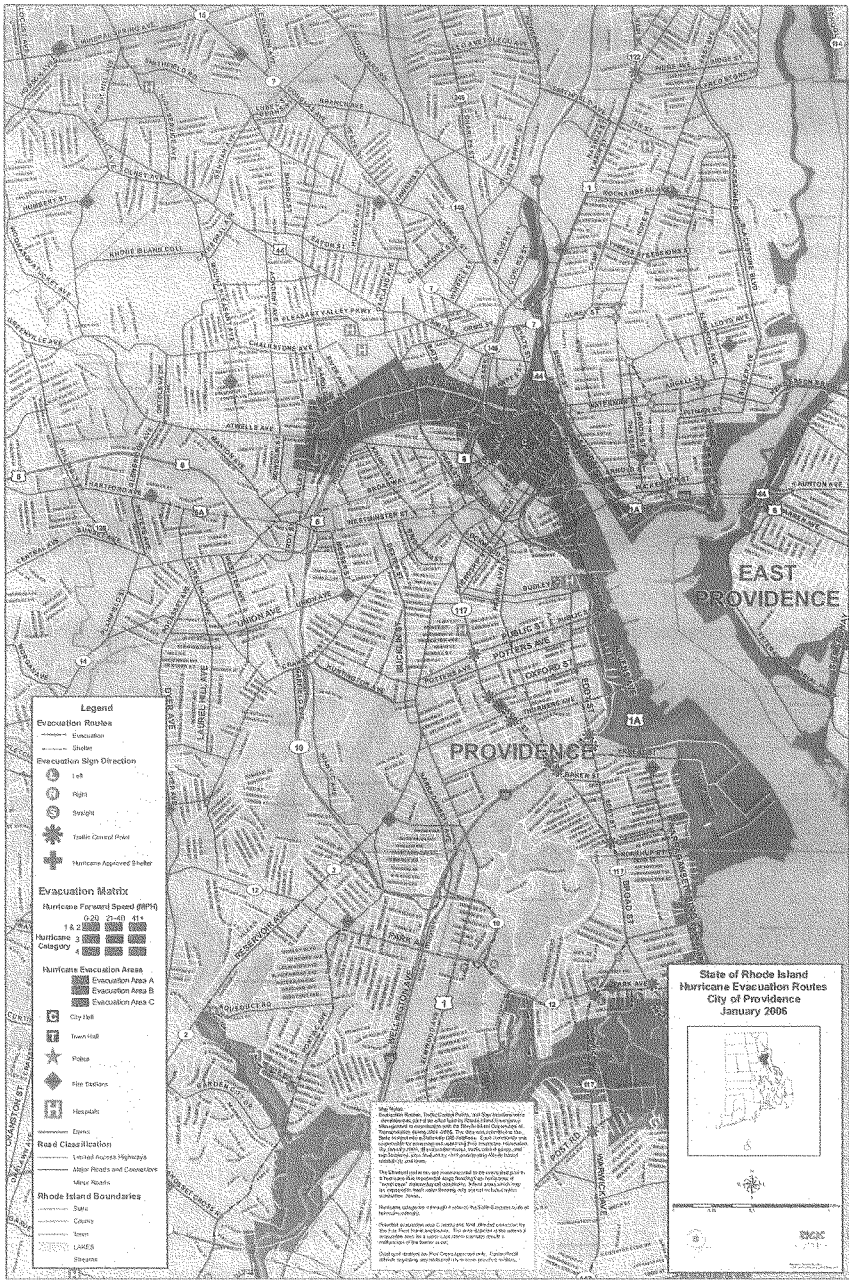
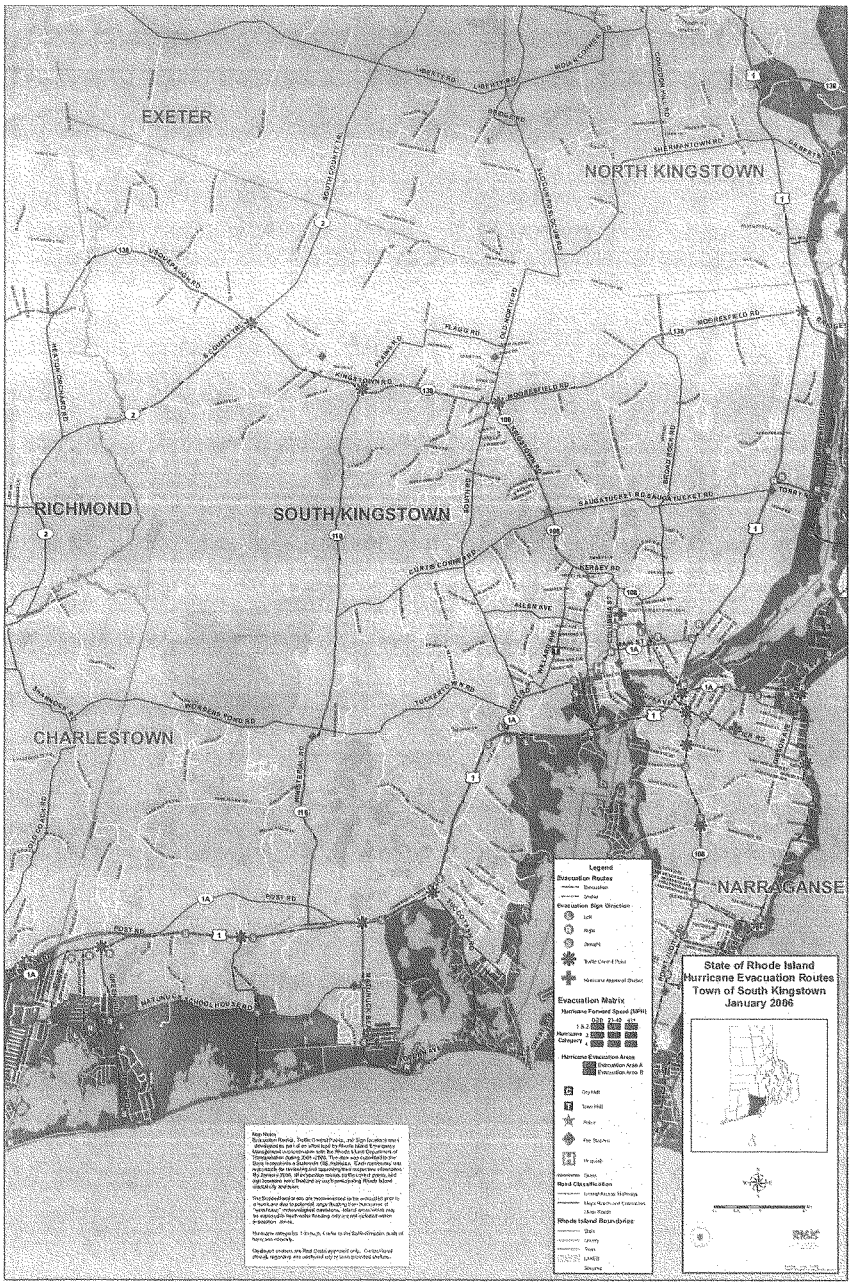
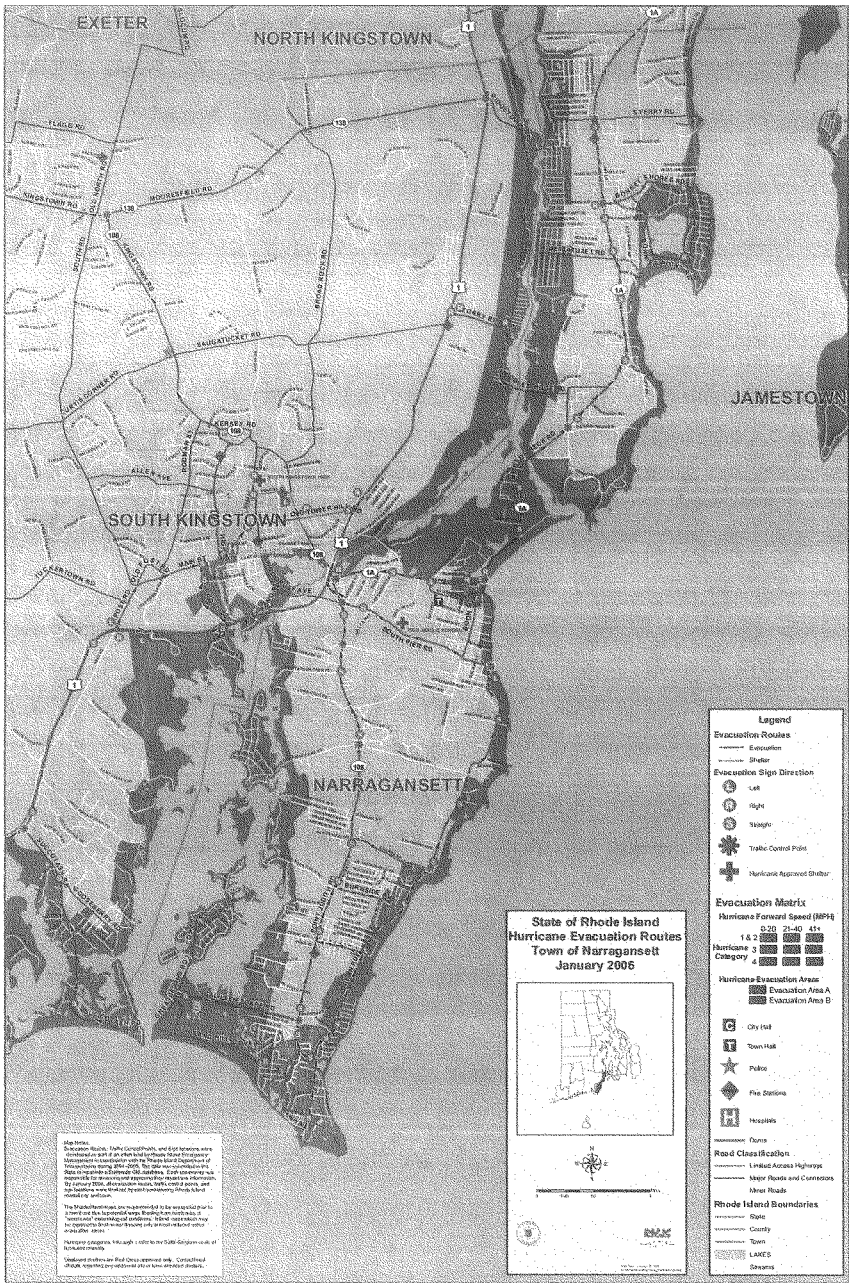
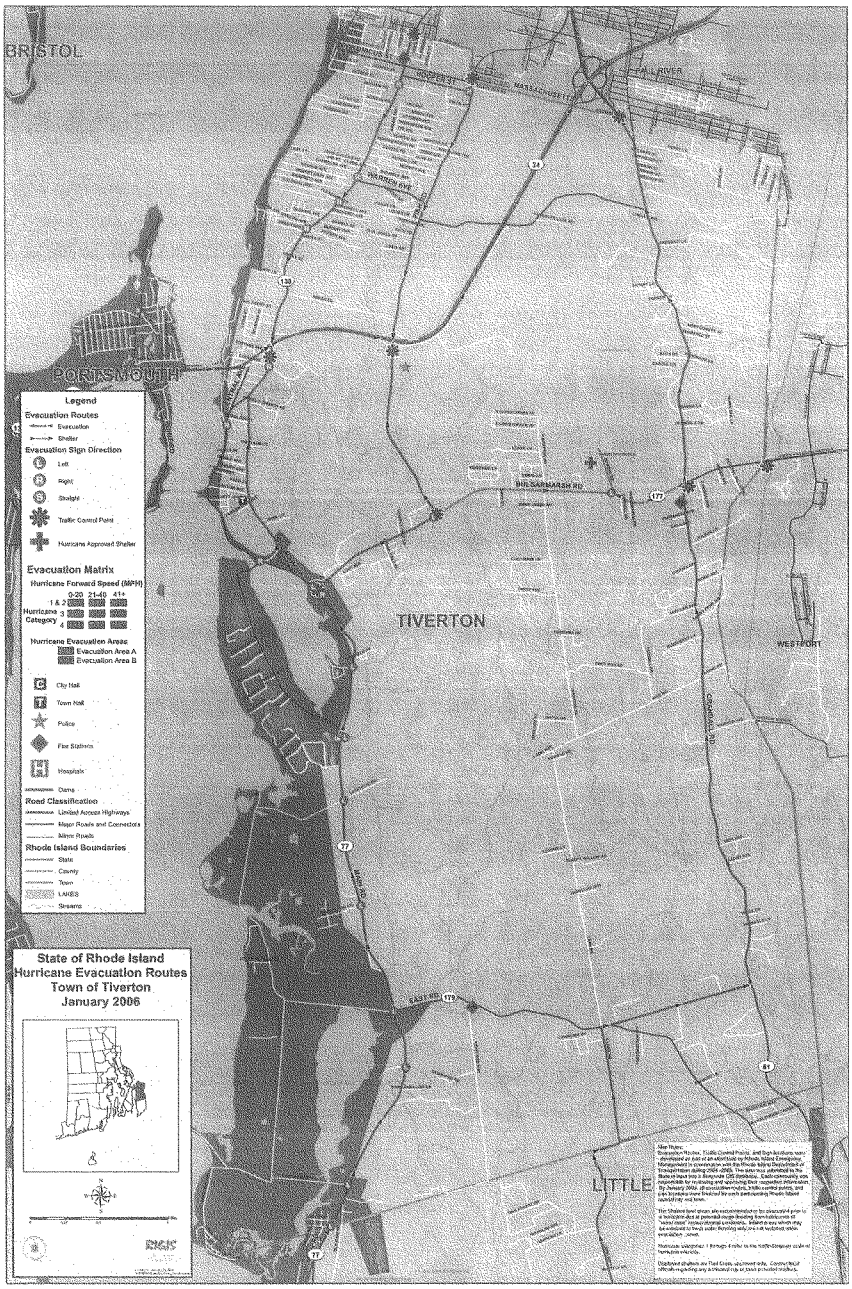
Evacuation Zone BN
Evacuation Zone BO
Evacuation Zone BP
Evacuation Zone BQ
Evacuation Zone BR

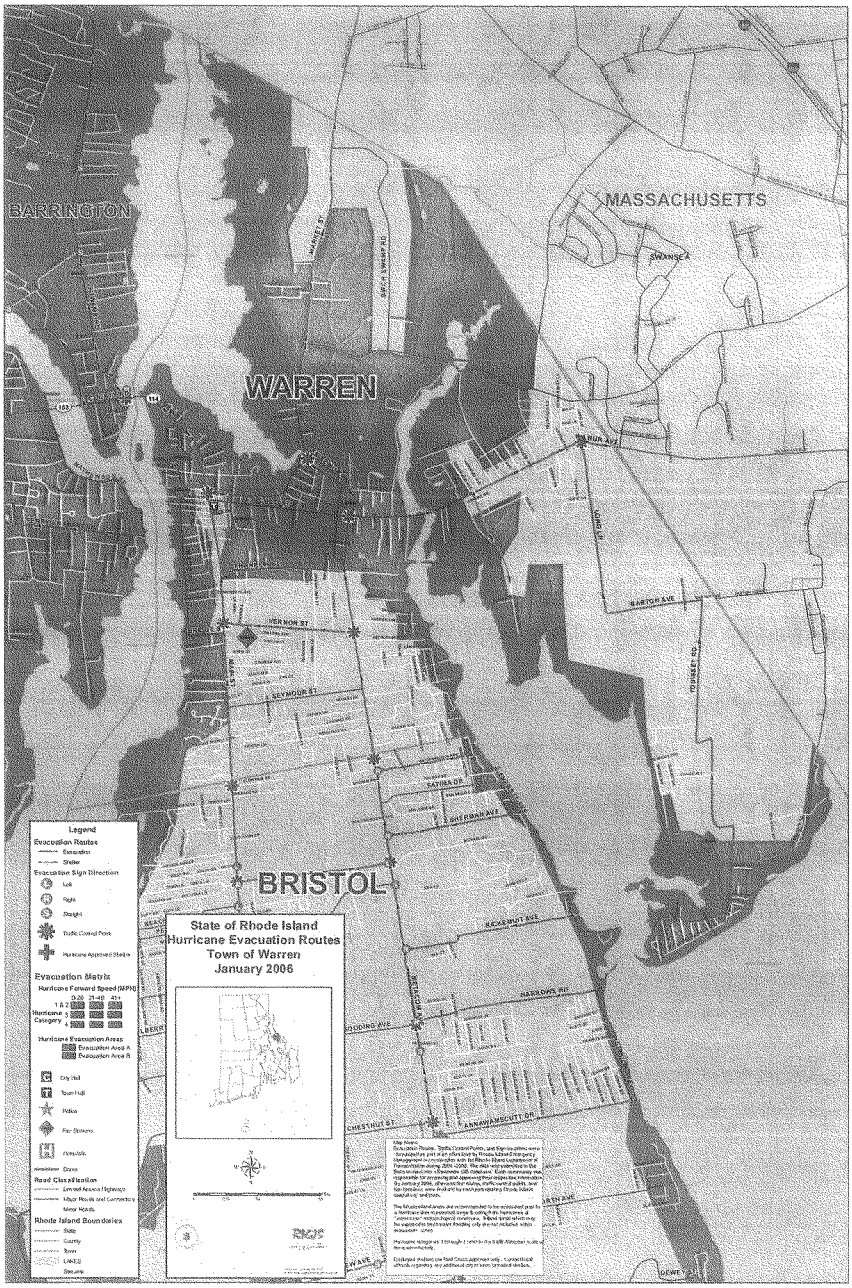

BRISTOL
PORTSMOUTH
MIDDLETOWN
State of Rhode Island
Hurricane Evacuation Routes
Town of Portsmouth
January 2006
Legend
Evacuation Routes
Evacuation
Shelter
Evacuation Sign Direction
Left
Right
Straight
Traffic Control Point
Hurricane Approved Shelter
Evacuation Matrix
Hurricane Forward Speed (MPH)
0-20
21-40
41+
Hurricane Category
1 & 2
3
4
Hurricane Evacuation Areas
Evacuation Area A
Evacuation Area B
City Hall
Town Hall
Police
Fire Stations
Hospitals
Dams
Road Classification
Limited Access Highways
Major Roads and Connectors
Minor Roads
Rhode Island Boundaries
State
County
Town
LAKES
Streams

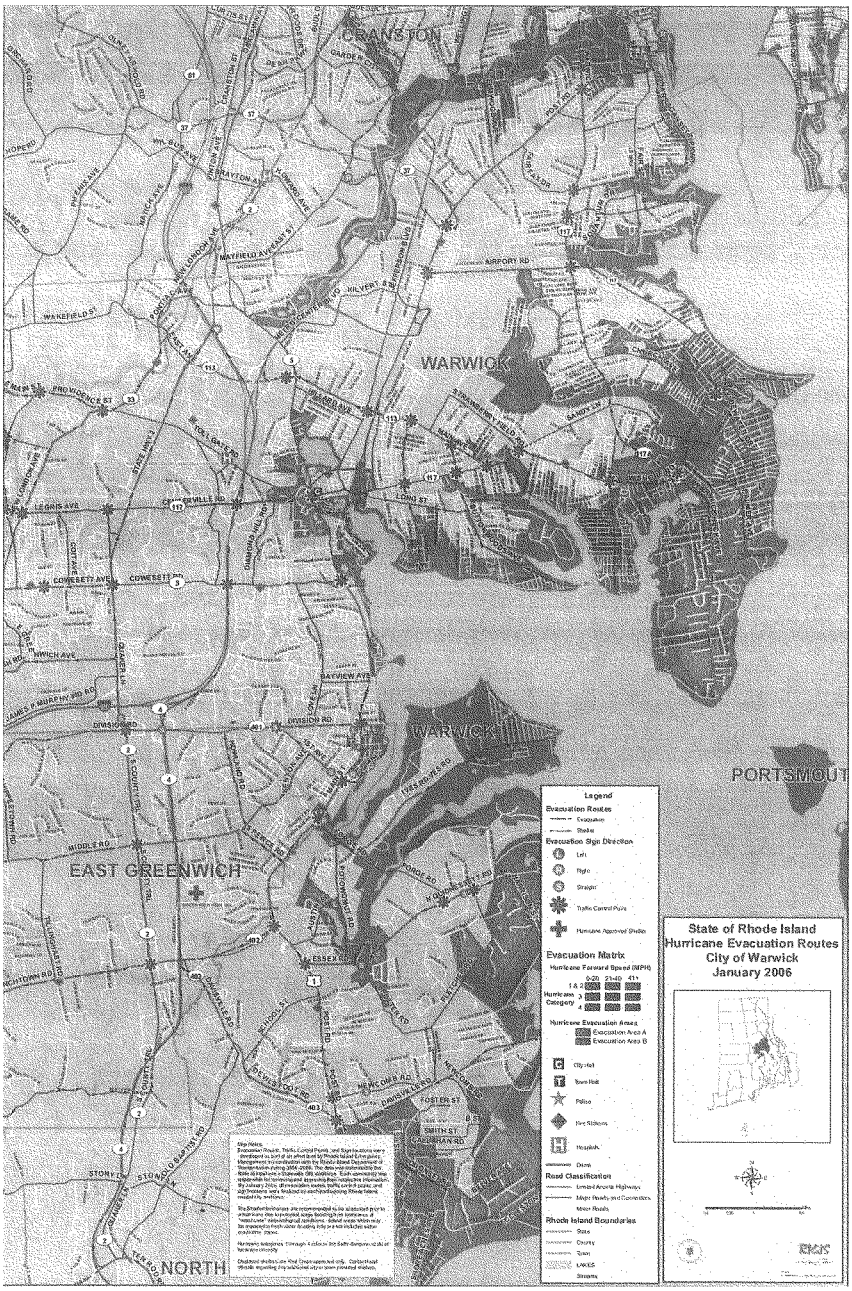

State of Rhode Island
Hurricane Evacuation Routes
City of Providence
January 2006
Legend
Evacuation Routes
Evacuation
Shelter
Evacuation Sign Direction
Left
Right
Straight
Traffic Control Point
Hurricane Approved Shelter
Evacuation Matrix
Hurricane Forward Speed (MPH)
0-20
21-40
41+
Hurricane Category
1 & 2
3
4
Hurricane Evacuation Areas
Evacuation Area A
Evacuation Area B
Evacuation Area C
City Hall
Town Hall
Police
Fire Stations
Hospitals
Piers
Road Classification
Limited Access Highways
Major Roads and Connectors
Minor Roads
Rhode Island Boundaries
State
County
Town
LAKES
Streams
PROVIDENCE
EAST PROVIDENCE

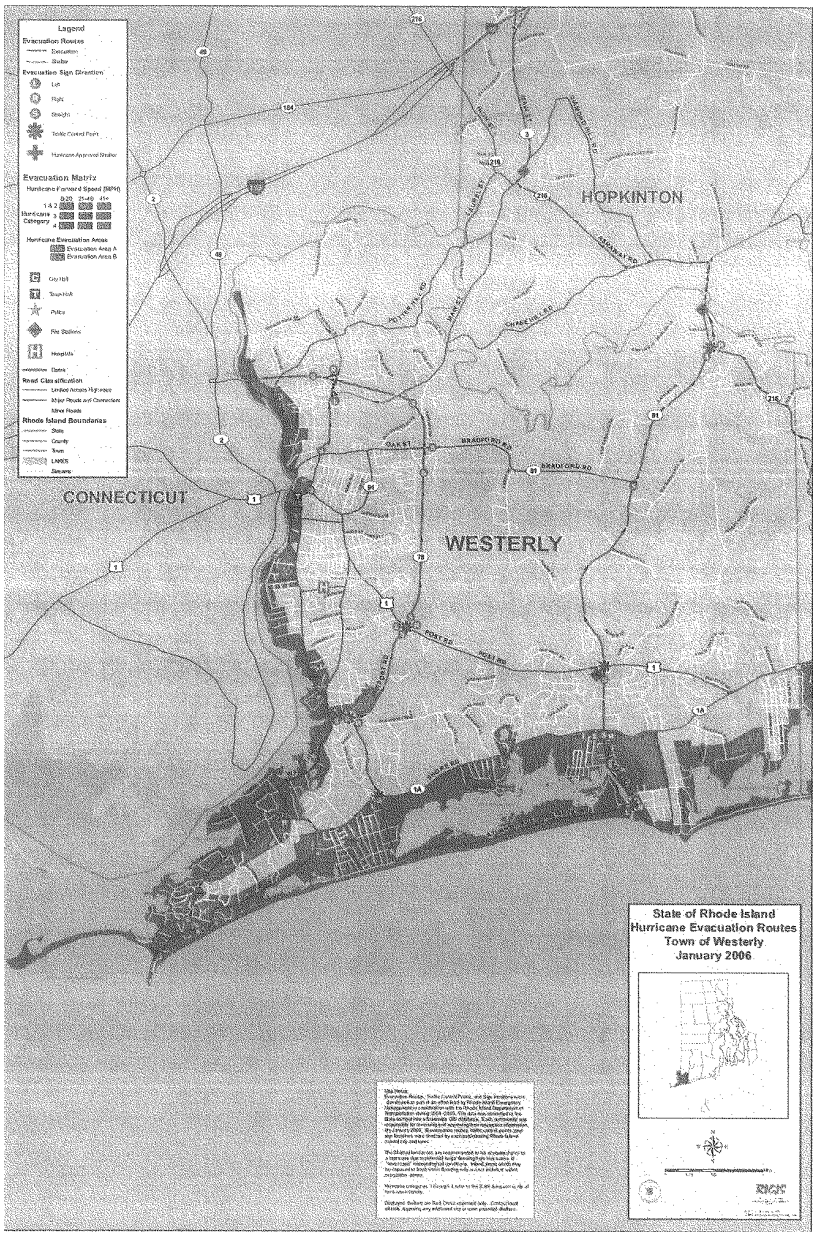

EXETER
NORTH KINGSTOWN
RICHMOND
SOUTH KINGSTOWN
CHARLESTOWN
NARRAGANSE
State of Rhode Island
Hurricane Evacuation Routes
Town of South Kingstown
January 2006
Legend
Evacuation Routes
Evacuation Sign Direction
Left
Right
Straight
Traffic Control Point
Hurricane Approach Shelter
Evacuation Matrix
Hurricane Forward Speed (MPH)
Hurricane Category
Hurricane Evacuation Areas
Evacuation Area A
Evacuation Area B
City Hall
Town Hall
Police
Fire Stations
Hospital
Road Classification
Rhode Island Boundaries
State
County
Town
Map Notes


EXETER
NORTH KINGSTOWN
JAMESTOWN
SOUTH KINGSTOWN
NARRAGANSETT
State of Rhode Island
Hurricane Evacuation Routes
Town of Narragansett
January 2005
Legend
Evacuation Routes
Evacuation
Shelter
Evacuation Sign Direction
Left
Right
Straight
Traffic Control Point
Hurricane Approved Shelter
Evacuation Matrix
Hurricane Forward Speed (MPH)
0-20
21-40
41+
Hurricane Category
1 & 2
3
4
Hurricane Evacuation Areas
Evacuation Area A
Evacuation Area B
City Hall
Town Hall
Police
Fire Stations
Hospitals
Dams
Road Classification
Limited Access Highways
Major Roads and Connectors
Minor Roads
Rhode Island Boundaries
State
County
Town
LAKES
Streams


BRISTOL
FALL RIVER
PORTSMOUTH
TIVERTON
WESTPORT
LITTLE
Legend
Evacuation Routes
Evacuation
Shelter
Evacuation Sign Direction
Left
Right
Straight
Traffic Control Point
Hurricane Approved Shelter
Evacuation Matrix
Hurricane Forward Speed (MPH)
0-20 21-40 41+
1 & 2
Hurricane Category 3
4
Hurricane Evacuation Areas
Evacuation Area A
Evacuation Area B
City Hall
Town Hall
Police
Fire Stations
Hospitals
Dams
Road Classification
Limited Access Highways
Major Routes and Connectors
Minor Roads
Rhode Island Boundaries
State
County
Town
LAKES
Streams
State of Rhode Island
Hurricane Evacuation Routes
Town of Tiverton
January 2006


BARRINGTON
MASSACHUSETTS
SWANSEA
WARREN
BRISTOL
JOHNSON ST
SEYMOUR ST
BARTON AVE
ROUNDS RD
SATINA DR
SHERMAN AVE
ROCKWOOD AVE
HASKINS RD
CHESTNUT ST
ANNAWAMSCUTT DR
Legend
Evacuation Routes
Evacuation
Shelter
Evacuation Sign Direction
Left
Right
Straight
Traffic Control Point
Hurricane Approved Shelter
Evacuation Matrix
Hurricane Forward Speed (MPH)
0-20
21-40
41+
Hurricane Category
1 & 2
3
4
Hurricane Evacuation Areas
Evacuation Area A
Evacuation Area B
City Hall
Town Hall
Police
Fire Stations
Hospitals
Dams
Road Classification
Limited Access Highways
Major Roads and Connectors
Minor Roads
Rhode Island Boundaries
State
County
Town
LMCG
Streams
State of Rhode Island
Hurricane Evacuation Routes
Town of Warren
January 2006


CRANSTON
WARWICK
WARWICK
PORTSMOUT
EAST GREENWICH
NORTH
Legend
Evacuation Routes
Evacuation
Shelter
Evacuation Sign Direction
Left
Right
Straight
Traffic Control Point
Hurricane Approved Shelter
Evacuation Matrix
Hurricane Forward Speed (MPH)
0-20
21-40
41+
Hurricane Category
1 & 2
3
4
5
Hurricane Evacuation Areas
Evacuation Area A
Evacuation Area B
City Hall
Town Hall
Police
Fire Stations
Hospitals
Dams
Road Classification
Limited Access Highways
Major Roads and Connectors
Minor Roads
Rhode Island Boundaries
State
County
Town
LAKES
Streams
State of Rhode Island
Hurricane Evacuation Routes
City of Warwick
January 2006


Legend
Evacuation Routes
Evacuation
Shelter
Evacuation Sign Direction
Left
Right
Straight
Traffic Control Point
Hurricane Approved Shelter
Evacuation Matrix
Hurricane Forward Speed (MPH)
0-20
21-40
41+
1 & 2
Hurricane Category
3 & 4
5
Hurricane Evacuation Areas
Evacuation Area A
Evacuation Area B
City Hall
Town Hall
Police
Fire Stations
Hospitals
Dams
Road Classification
Limited Access Highways
Other Roads and Connectors
Other Roads
Rhode Island Boundaries
State
County
Town
LAKES
Streams
HOPKINTON
CONNECTICUT
WESTERLY
State of Rhode Island
Hurricane Evacuation Routes
Town of Westerly
January 2006