



*Local governments working together for a better metropolitan region*

February 19, 2009

*District of Columbia  
Bladensburg\*  
Bowie  
College Park  
Frederick  
Frederick County  
Gaithersburg  
Greenbelt  
Montgomery County  
Prince George's County  
Rockville  
Takoma Park  
Alexandria  
Arlington County  
Fairfax  
Fairfax County  
Falls Church  
Loudoun County  
Manassas  
Manassas Park  
Prince William County*

*\*Adjunct member*

Nancy Ward  
Acting Administrator  
Federal Emergency Management Agency  
500 C Street SW  
Washington, DC 20472

Dear Acting Administrator Ward:

I am writing on behalf of the National Capital Region Emergency Preparedness Council (EPC) to call your attention to concerns regarding reimbursement for Washington area hospitals that incurred expenses during the recent Inauguration. The EPC, which is supported by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG), directed that I share this concern at its February 11, 2009 meeting.

As you know, an impressive public-private partnership organized early and effectively to plan for the January 20, 2009 Inauguration of President Barack Obama. Hospitals in the National Capital Region were an integral part of this regional planning effort. Combined extensive preparations by area hospitals contributed to an extraordinarily smooth and successful Inaugural event for the estimated 1.8 million visitors.

Most of the government agencies which expended funds to prepare for the Inauguration are seeking reimbursement either under the terms of the Declaration of Emergency or through approved or pending supplemental federal appropriations. However, the EPC understands that District of Columbia, Suburban Maryland and Northern Virginia hospitals to date have not been eligible for reimbursement and further, there are limited mechanisms that would easily permit reimbursement now and in future regional events such as the Inauguration.

The EPC believes hospitals in our region deserve to be reimbursed for expenses associated with the 2009 Inauguration just like government entities and first responders. Clearly, hospitals played an undeniably essential public service.

Hospital preparation for the Inaugural was extensive. For example, in the District of Columbia the Washington Hospital Center stood up 15 emergency rooms to prepare for the event – ten more than normal and the Specialty Hospital of Washington slept 100 National Guard troops from Iowa.

Hospitals in Montgomery and Prince George's Counties expressed an appreciation that they be considered for Inauguration planning reimbursement funding. The successful outcome of the Inauguration was in part due to hospitals' collaborating and partnering with many other agencies in the National Capital Region. Each of the hospitals in the National Capital Region was involved in these extensive planning efforts. Costs were incurred for the extra staffing and supplies necessary for potential surge response.

The Northern Virginia Hospital Alliance, their Regional Hospital Coordination Center and the hospitals in both Arlington and Fairfax Counties were also significantly involved in planning and establishing support to the Inauguration and District of Columbia hospitals. The anticipated surge of patients within the area coupled with a real threat for District of Columbia hospitals to become overwhelmed caused these Northern Virginia hospitals to increase staffing of medical and support personnel, as well as increasing security personnel during the entire Inaugural period. In addition, supplemental medical supplies were stocked to meet expected needs of increased patient loads. The potentials of traffic and mass medical transportation situations demanded that staff be on-site prior to any large-scale emergency situation.

The EPC asks that you consider and support the most timely and appropriate means by which area hospitals could receive reimbursement for their Inaugural-related expenses.

Thank you again for your efforts for our region.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M Knapp', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Michael Knapp  
Councilmember, Montgomery County  
Chairman, National Capital Region Emergency  
Preparedness Council

Cc:

Hon. Adrian Fenty, Mayor District of Columbia  
Hon. Martin O'Malley, Governor, State of Maryland  
Hon. Tim Kaine, Governor, Commonwealth of Virginia  
Members, National Capital Regional Congressional Delegation  
Members, National Capital Region Emergency Preparedness Council  
Members, COG Board of Directors