

OPENING STATEMENT
The Honorable Ben Quayle (R-AZ), Chairman
Subcommittee on Technology and Innovation
Committee Print, Natural Hazards Risk Reduction Act of 2011

November 15, 2011

I am pleased to call the markup this morning for consideration of a Committee Print of the *Natural Hazards Risk Reduction Act of 2011*.

As we have tragically witnessed this year, earthquakes and windstorms take lives, destroy homes and businesses, and cause billions of dollars of damage in the United States and around the world. The effects of these disasters can reverberate for decades.

Portions of all 50 states are vulnerable to earthquake hazards, and according to the United States Geologic Survey, twenty-six urban areas in fourteen U.S. states face significant seismic risk. Though infrequent, earthquakes are unique among natural hazards in that they strike without warning.

Millions of Americans across the U.S. live in areas vulnerable to storms with damaging winds, and as populations continue to grow in areas prone to hurricanes, tornadoes, and windstorms, our vulnerability to severe weather will only increase.

This past April, our Subcommittee held a hearing examining earthquake risk in the United States and our efforts to develop hazard reduction measures. I am pleased that Congresswoman Biggert plans to introduce the Natural Hazards Risk Reduction Act of 2011, which will address important research and development activities to reduce the risk and impact of earthquake and windstorm hazards.

The Committee Print we are considering today will reauthorize the activities of the National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program and the National Windstorm Impact Reduction Program. Over the years, NEHRP has been instrumental in developing and advancing earthquake knowledge, seismic building codes, and raising the awareness of both officials and the general public to earthquake hazards. NWIRP has supported activities to improve the understanding of windstorms and their impacts, and to develop and encourage the implementation of cost-effective mitigation measures to reduce these effects. Both programs are targeted federal research and development efforts to mitigate the loss of life and property due to wind and earthquake related hazards.

I want to thank Representatives Biggert and Neugebauer for collaborating on this effort, and I look forward to moving this important legislation forward. I yield the balance of my time to the gentle lady from Illinois, for any comments she may have.