

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

June 10, 2008

The Honorable Michael Chertoff
Secretary
Department of Homeland Security
Washington, DC 20528

Dear Secretary Chertoff:

We are writing in strong support of the Metro Boston Homeland Security Region's (MBHSR) proposal to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) within the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). As you know, this funding is available through the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI). The City of Boston's Office of Emergency Preparedness (MOEP) has submitted a \$23 million proposal for the MBHSR in order to further develop the capabilities necessary for the region to prevent, protect, respond to, and recover from catastrophic events that have the potential to disrupt the region's infrastructure.

Since June of 2003, the MBHSR has been the recipient of UASI funding. The cities of Boston, Cambridge, Chelsea, Everett, Quincy, Revere, and Somerville, and the towns of Brookline and Winthrop have formed a unique partnership representing approximately 95 square miles. With a resident population of 1,051,809, and a daytime combined population for Boston and Cambridge alone of as many as 2.5 million people, as well as significant critical infrastructure and leading firms in major industries across the U.S. economy, the MBHSR represents a tempting terrorist target.

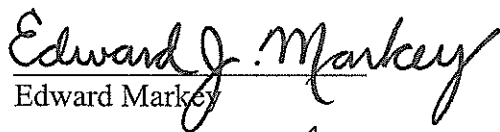
As a result of Boston's designation as a UASI Region five years ago, vital resources have been directed towards a number of critical infrastructures and potential threat elements. The Urban Area has successfully integrated homeland security activities within police, fire, EMS, public health and other disciplines. This collaborative model of working across departments, coupled with working regionally with a core set of cities and towns, has fostered regional collaboration at all levels. The MBHSR has strengthened preparedness and response capabilities for our first responders to a region which serves as the economic hub of New England and hosts several high-profile annual events which draw more than a million people to the region.

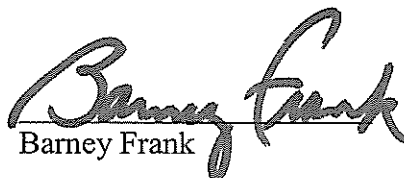
Support from the UASI program has been essential in the hardening of potential targets and providing a more thorough understanding of threats and vulnerabilities related to critical facilities and systems. These efforts have increased security for the region's major transportation hubs, including the North and South Station rail infrastructure, Logan International Airport, and the port of Boston, where weekly LNG tankers unload their cargo in the heart of the region.

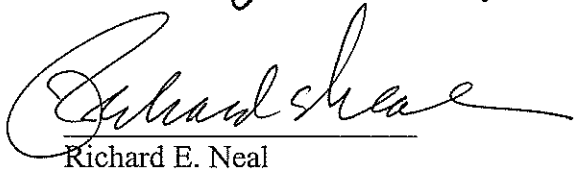
While the MBHSR has made tremendous improvements and innovations in the area of preparedness as part of UASI, significant challenges remain. The proposed activities to be undertaken by this grant will further strengthen the region's capabilities in the areas of communications interoperability, intelligence and information sharing, training and exercises, evacuation and mass care, medical surge and mass prophylaxis, critical infrastructure protection and improvised explosive device preparedness, and regional CBRNE response.

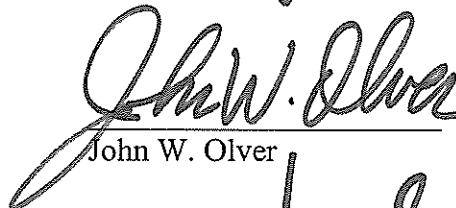
The Massachusetts Congressional Delegation stands by the first responders of the MBHSR and we strongly support this request. We request that you look favorably upon this application.

Sincerely,

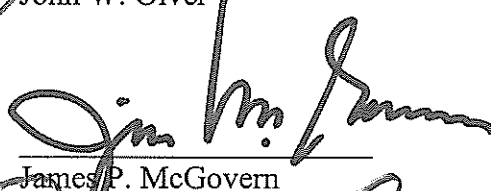

Edward Markey


Barney Frank

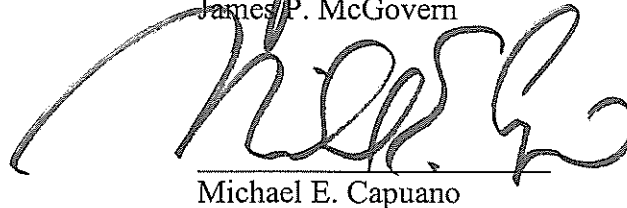

Richard E. Neal

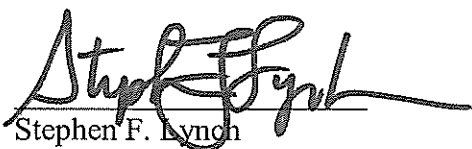

John W. Olver

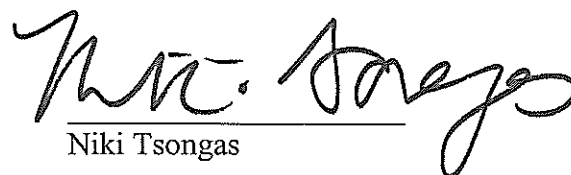

William D. Delahunt


James P. McGovern


John F. Tierney


Michael E. Capuano


Stephen F. Lynch


Niki Tsongas