



# IAFSM

Illinois Association for  
Floodplain and Stormwater Management

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**OFFICERS:**

March 15, 2010

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Jeff Wickenkamp, PE, D.WRE

Governor Pat Quinn

**VICE CHAIR**

Michael Cothard, PE, CFM

RE: Oppose Senate Bill 2556

**SECRETARY**

Lillian Prince, PE, CFM

The Illinois Association for Floodplain and Stormwater Management (IAFSM) represents over 600 floodplain managers, engineers, local officials, insurance agents, and state and federal agency staff. IAFSM is the voice of professionals in Illinois who have experience in floodplain management, mitigation, engineering, floodplain mapping, insurance, planning, and public outreach.

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IAFSM is very concerned that Senate Bill 2556 could increase the cost of disasters in both personal and financial terms for the Citizens of Illinois. Senate Bill 2556 removes from the state's definition of "floodplain" any area located behind a Federal levee. The bill does not make mention of FEMA maps or FEMA regulations, only state regulations. As currently worded, the bill exempts all areas behind any Federal levee (regardless of protection levels or safe engineering design). This will allow development activities to occur in floodplain areas with inadequate or very little protection.

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Open

The bill encourages development that is not consistent with the level of protection provided. Critical facilities like hospitals, residential care facilities, water treatment facilities, police and fire stations could be built to a standard that renders them unusable during flood events that exceed the 100-year event limit created by the bill. Most importantly, the bill establishes a dangerous conflict with existing Federal and local floodplain regulations as adopted for participation in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). Failure to properly regulate floodplain development in these areas could jeopardize local availability of flood insurance, several types of grants and loans, as well as disaster assistance.

Currently, the State of Illinois' floodway regulations ensure compliance with NFIP regulations. If these areas are exempted from state regulations, the burden of FEMA floodway standards will have to be transferred to each community. Should the bill become law, Illinois communities will no longer be compliant with the NFIP.

Illinois has a well deserved reputation as a national leader in flood loss reduction. Senate Bill 2556 is a dangerous move to reverse that trend. The bill will not only risk life and property, but could jeopardize the availability of flood insurance and disaster assistance for every citizen in Illinois. We ask that you not support this bill.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey A. Wickenkamp, P.E, CFM, D.WRE  
Chair

- c. Senator John Cullerton, Senate President
- Senator Dale Risinger, PE
- Director Marc Miller, IDNR
- Janet Odeshoo, FEMA
- Patrick Glithero, FEMA