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BuildStrong Coalition Praises Introduction of the SMART Rebuilding Act

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The BuildStrong Coalition applauds Congressman Jeff Denham (R-CA-10) for introducing [H.R. 4455](#), the Supporting Mitigation Activities and Resiliency Targets for Rebuilding Act, or SMART Rebuilding Act. The bipartisan bill, which is cosponsored by Congressman Mike Capuano (D-MA-7), seeks to help American communities rebuild and recover while providing them with the resources they need to prevent future destruction.

About the legislation, Rep. Denham stated, “Every year, the federal government spends billions of dollars rebuilding the same structures in the same places with little consideration of the next storm. It’s time to take action to save lives and taxpayer money by thinking ahead when we build our communities, instead of typical reactionary government policies.”

The legislation comes at a critical time in the wake of Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria – which led to over 200 deaths and projected damages exceeding \$300 billion combined – as well as the recent California wildfires, which caused more than 40 deaths and over \$3 billion in damages in Congressman Denham’s district and the surrounding regions.

“The U.S. has already spent more than 50 billion dollars on disaster recovery in recent months, and we will spend over 200 billion more on this year’s storms,” said BuildStrong Coalition Executive Director Phil Anderson. “Congressman Denham’s legislation will ensure that these funds are an investment in a stronger future that will save lives, property, and taxpayer dollars, not continue spending on the same broken system that left America vulnerable in the first place.”

Research has repeatedly demonstrated that every dollar spent on mitigation saves between four and eight taxpayer dollars in the future disaster costs. The SMART Rebuilding Act would leverage this fact to help strengthen the nation’s homes and buildings and ensure that the country is prepared before the next disaster hits. Key provisions of the legislation include:

1. **Federal Cost Share Reform Incentives:** Incentivizes states to invest in resiliency by allowing the federal cost share to be increased based on nationally-acknowledged resiliency standards put in place pre-disaster.
2. **Pre-Disaster Mitigation Fund:** Leverages the life- and cost-saving power of prevention by establishing a new National Public Infrastructure Pre-Disaster Mitigation Fund to provide states with access to on-budget pre-disaster mitigation funding for activities that

provide a measurable reduction of risk. The fund would be financed by allocating 6% of annual funding from the Post-Disaster Relief Fund to preventative mitigation programs.

3. **Post-Disaster Building Code Funding:** Helps states and communities build to stronger standards post-disaster by ensuring that building code implementation and enforcement funding is available to affected communities post-disaster.

The BuildStrong Coalition is a group of firefighters, emergency responders, insurers, engineers, architects, contractors and manufacturers, as well as consumer organizations, code specialists, and many others committed to building a more resilient America. Learn more at buildstrongamerica.com.

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