

Coalition of Geospatial Organizations

September 4, 2025

The Honorable Ted Cruz, Chairman
Commerce, Science & Transportation Cmte.
United States Senate
254 Russell Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Maria Cantwell, Ranking Member
Commerce, Science & Transportation Cmte.
United States Senate
254 Russell Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Cruz and Ranking Member Cantwell,

On behalf of the Coalition of Geospatial Organizations (COGO), a coalition of 14 professional associations representing more than 170,000 geospatial practitioners, we respectfully urge your strong support and robust funding for the U.S. Geological Survey's (USGS) 3D Elevation Program (3DEP) and the National Landslide Hazards Reduction Program in the FY 2026 Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act. These programs are codified by the National Landslide Preparedness Act (P.L. 116- 323) for which we are urging reauthorization.

COGO recognizes the transformative impact of the 3DEP program. Continued efforts to complete nationwide 3DEP baseline coverage satisfies the growing demand for consistent, high-quality topographic data, and a wide range of other three-dimensional representations of the Nation's natural and constructed features. The USGS has identified more than 600 applications that benefit from enhanced elevation data. Data procured from 3DEP is being applied by state, tribal, and local governments, nonprofits and private companies to:

- economic development
- flood risk management
- infrastructure development/maintenance
- water resources management
- aviation safety
- telecommunications
- homeland security
- emergency response
- precision agriculture
- energy production
- pipeline safety
- transportation planning/safety

Enhanced elevation data is being used in these and many other areas to enhance efficiency and improve safety. 3DEP promotes economic growth and facilitates resource development and management, while enhancing environmental protection, assisting with infrastructure improvement, and enhancing the quality of life for all Americans. In addition, lidar data from 3DEP helps provide the USGS Natural Hazards Program with the best available scientific information and tools to reduce the threat of injuries, fatalities, and economic loss from a variety of disasters caused by natural hazards, such as landslides, sinkholes, earthquakes, and volcanoes.

The USGS, with involvement from the private sector and other stakeholders including State governments, conducted a National Enhanced Elevation Assessment (NEEA) to determine and document the continued need for national elevation data within government and private markets. The results indicate that enhanced elevation data has the potential to generate \$13 billion in annual benefits, at a benefits-to-cost ratio of 4.7 to 1.

Coalition of Geospatial Organizations

Today, as a result of a highly efficient and successful partnership model, USGS 3DEP has achieved 99% nationwide coverage, in effect providing a nationwide digital baseline for this crucial elevation dataset. Additional data collection is needed as part of the next generation of 3DEP to improve data quality, track changes over time, and compound the value of this national asset. Combined with data collection efforts underway with the 3D Hydrography Program (3DHP) which has achieved roughly 10% nationwide coverage, USGS continues to move forward in building the 3D National Topography Model (3DNTM).

We need to do more to fund programs and research efforts to prevent future natural disasters from becoming national tragedies. On January 5, 2021, the National Landslide Preparedness Act (P.L. 116-323) was signed into law making landslides a national priority. This important statute authorized 3DEP and the National Landslide Hazards Reduction Program to better identify and understand landslide risks, coordinate with local and state agencies, and help improve emergency preparedness.

We are committed to working with our colleagues on both sides of the aisle to do everything we can to maximize the benefits for our stakeholders and for citizens across the country from the more than 600 public applications and business uses of enhanced elevation data produced by the 3D Elevation Program. Thank you for your attention to this request.

Sincerely,



Jeff Lovin, Chair

Coalition of Geospatial Organizations



COGO Member Organizations

American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE)	American Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing (ASPRS)
American Association of Geographers (AAG)	Cartography and Geographic Information Society (CaGIS)
American Association for Geodetic Surveying (AAGS)	Geographic Information Systems Certification Institute (GISCI)
International Association of Assessing Officers (IAAO)	Management Association for Private Photogrammetric Surveyors (MAPPS)
National Society of Professional Surveyors (NSPS)	National States Geographic Information Council (NSGIC)
United States Geospatial Intelligence Foundation (USGIF)	University Consortium for Geographic Information Science (UCGIS)
Geospatial Professional Network (dba URISA)	National Tribal Geographic Information Support Center
MidAmerica GIS Consortium	