

Coalition of Geospatial Organizations

Coalition of Geospatial Organizations (COGO) Urges Senate to Include Geospatial Investment in Stimulus Bill

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Reston, VA, February 2, 2009 - As the United States Senate begins debate on a bill to stimulate the economy, the Coalition of Geospatial Organizations (COGO) has requested funds for the development of a complete national geospatial infrastructure, the databases and technologies that create infrastructure base maps, in the stimulus package.

In a letter to Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV), COGO Chairman Cy Smith said, "The use of geospatial technology to create a base map for infrastructure initiatives supports a variety of uses and formats including transportation infrastructure, water resource management, alternative energy research, and project siting. A national geospatial infrastructure would also provide a foundation for monitoring the US economic recovery across all communities, allowing for projects to get underway immediately and leaving a valuable legacy for the future."

"Funding for a national geospatial infrastructure would immediately stimulate job creation, innovation, and education in the field," the COGO organizations told the Senate.

In its letter, COGO noted that the U.S. Department of Labor has identified the geospatial profession as one of three most important emerging and evolving new science and technology fields.

The Coalition of Geospatial Organizations (COGO) (www.urisa.org/cogo) is a recently formed coalition of 15 national professional societies, trade associations, and membership organizations in the geospatial field, representing more than 30,000 individual producers and users of geospatial data and technology. The coalition's founding Member Organizations are:

American Congress on Surveying and Mapping (ACSM)
American Society of Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing (ASPRS)
Association of American Geographers (AAG)
Cartography and Geographic Information Society (CAGIS)
Geospatial Information Technology Association (GITA)
GIS Certification Institute (GISCI)
International Association of Assessing Officers (IAAO)

Management Association for Private Photogrammetric Surveyors (MAPPS)
National States Geographic Information Council (NSGIC)
University Consortium for Geographic Information Science (UCGIS)
Urban and Regional Information Systems Association (URISA)

The founding Advisory Organizations are:

National Association of Counties (NACo)
National Emergency Number Association (NENA)
Western Governors Association (WGA)
American Planning Association (APA)

-30-

To view the COGO letter, please see pages 3 and 4 of this document.

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Coalition of Geospatial Organizations

January 26, 2009

The Honorable Harry Reid
United States Senate
Hart Senate Office Building – Room 528
2nd Street and Constitution Avenue, NE
Washington, DC 20510
Sent via FAX at 202-224-7327

RE: National Geospatial Infrastructure & Economic Recovery

Dear Senator Reid:

I am writing on behalf of the Coalition of Geospatial Organizations (COGO). COGO is a coalition of 15 national professional societies, trade associations, and membership organizations in the geospatial field, representing more than 30,000 individual users and producers of geospatial data and technology.

COGO supports Congressional action in the stimulus package to fund the development of a complete national geospatial infrastructure, the databases and technologies that create infrastructure base maps, which will serve as a public resource for project planners to support transportation infrastructure, water resource management, alternative energy research, and project siting. Such an infrastructure will also provide a foundation for monitoring the US economic recovery across our communities, allowing activities to get underway as soon as possible and leaving a valuable legacy for our future.

In addition to providing a needed and unified means for managing the thousands of infrastructure projects across the nation that will be part of the Stimulus Plan, the creation of a national geospatial infrastructure will immediately stimulate job creation, innovation, and education in the field of geospatial technology, which recently has been identified by the U.S. Department of Labor as one of the three most important emerging and evolving new science and technology fields. The U.S. has pioneered the development of the GIS, GPS, and related geospatial industries. A national geospatial infrastructure would help assure a leading role for the U.S. in the future of this crucial technology field.

There is no tool that is better suited, nor more effective than geospatial technology for addressing our Nation's most pressing infrastructure-related problems. In addition, a national geospatial infrastructure would provide enormous impetus for overcoming the obstacles commonly experienced at federal, state and local levels that inhibit effective collaboration between levels of government and among elements of the public and private sectors. The resultant positive impact upon the US economic recovery effort

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cannot be overstated. It is our firm belief that a national geospatial infrastructure will form an essential component of the nation's economic stimulus.

The member organizations of COGO deeply appreciate your consideration of this request and pledge our assistance with the important issues Congress will address in the coming months. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Cyril R. Smith
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Past-President, National States Geographic Information Council
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cc: COGO Delegates & Advisory Organizations

