

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

Coalition of Geospatial Organizations

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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cc: COGO Delegates & Advisory Organizations

