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January 11, 2023

First Former State Emergency Management Director Elected To Congress Is A Big Deal



The Honorable Jared Moskowitz
U.S. House of Representatives
Representing Florida's 23rd
Congressional District
Former Director
Florida Division of Emergency
Management

We use **#NEMAFamily** because, as an organization, we are a family. We're there for each other. We support each other and cheer each other on in good times, difficult times, and everything in between. As our colleague takes his oath as a United States Congressman, we thank **Rep. Moskowitz** for his service to the country, to emergency management, and for being part of the **#NEMAFamily**. We continue to support and cheer him on in his new role!

As the first former state emergency management director and NEMA member elected to Congress, this is a great accomplishment - Congratulations! What prompted you to run for office?

State Emergency Management Directors come from a background of delivering results and ensuring the people they serve receive the help they need. The job is not partisan. We are **results oriented**. With how dysfunctional Washington can be, there needs to be more elected officials with a history of getting things done by working with everyone – even those they disagree with. We must work to keep emergency management response nonpartisan. With the opening in my now congressional seat, I saw an opportunity to serve the people of my state and deliver the help they need.

In paving a path for other emergency managers to follow, how will your unique perspective impact future discussions and decisions?

As someone who was an elected official before they became an EM Director, I understood how important the appropriation process is to making sure EM has the resources needed to respond. People often forget about us, until disaster strikes. We have to work on keeping the focus on **building up our capabilities**. Emergency managers must engage more with the political process to raise our profile and educate legislators on what we do so that we can increase funding and understanding of the profession. Emergency managers get the job done and don't stop until we **deliver results and finish the mission**.

As the new year brings thoughts of resolutions, to look at your specific priorities for office in election security, gun violence as a hazard, pandemic preparedness and response, and mitigating efforts to build resilient communities; in what ways do you see emergency management play a role in your strategy?

In emergency management, we understand the role that preparedness plays in disaster mitigation. We have to take a larger role in **resiliency**, as we are on the forefront of response and recovery when politicians don't prepare appropriately. We are the ones who directed the first 50 state disaster in American History, and we need to talk about lessons learned about **pandemic response** and **supply chain**. We have to engage in DC and educate the members on **what we did**, the **challenges we faced**, and what is **coming our way in the future**. I want to help NEMA and its members engage with the members.

What is the bravest thing you have ever done to date?

I'm not brave. Watching parents bury their kids after a mass shooting at my high school in my hometown and turn that into a passion to save other kids, that's **brave!**

Let's talk footwear. What shoes have you decided to wear on day one and why?

Jordan 11 retro from Space Jam.



Oh, and we agree, ice cream IS delicious! What is your favorite flavor?

Soft serve coffee from carvel.

Not many people get argued into thinking differently, but experiences and stories move us, especially when we have the humility to listen and view the world from a different lens, from someone else's eyes.

- Shane Claiborne

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