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BUILDING RESILIENT INFRASTRUCTURE TAKES A VILLAGE



The Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) program provides an opportunity for emergency management to collaborate with other state agencies on innovative, game-changing infrastructure projects that will increase resilience across all sectors.

Injecting resilience into energy sector production, distribution, and end-use is one such urgent action as evidenced by the 2021 Texas power crisis. BRIC is a mitigation grant program funded through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

NEMA recently partnered with the National Association of State Energy Officials (NASEO) and the Business Council for Sustainable Energy to jointly encourage the U.S. Department of Energy to provide leadership on energy-sector resilience and security. In a letter to DOE Secretary Jennifer Granholm, the three groups outlined a series of actions that DOE could take to support the development of viable energy-related projects suitable for BRIC funding.

1. Provide technical assistance to states as they develop applications or innovative public-private energy projects leveraging BRIC funds.
2. Establish a coordinated cross-cutting DOE role to ensure DOE solution “silos” are bridged and leveraged with state and private efforts.
3. The DOE Office of Technology Transitions (OTT) should accelerate the transition of high-impact resilient energy technologies from DOE’s R&D activities across DOE offices in collaboration with the State Energy Offices.
4. Identify additional energy-focused resilience actions that DOE and the states could take as called for by DRRRA, as well as those priorities set by the Biden-Harris Administration.
5. Engage with the private sector on best practices related to projects and project application development experience, and tap into their work with local governments, tribes and states in this capacity.

At the state level, energy offices are focused on developing BRIC project ideas to present to emergency management that address microgrids, mission critical facility energy efficiency, building energy codes, grid hardening, and the utilization of on-site renewable power and storage.

NEMA encourages state emergency management agencies to reach out to their state energy partners to jointly identify energy related project priorities that may be suitable for future BRIC applications.

Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success.

- Henry Ford

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