



**2026 NEMA Mid-Year Emergency Management Policy and Leadership Forum**  
**March 10-14, 2026**  
**Capital Hilton Hotel - Washington, DC**

**Agenda**

**Tuesday, March 10**

6:45 – 7:45 am	Continental Breakfast	Congressional
8 am	Bus departs hotel for Capitol Hill	
8:30 am – 5 pm	State Director Capitol Hill Visits	Capitol Hill
6 – 7:30 pm	State Director Executive Session (closed)	North Gate

Wednesday, March 11, pre-meetings are closed.

8:30 am – 4 pm	EMAC Advisory Group/Executive Task Force (closed)	South American
8:30 am – 10:30 am	Deputy Directors Group (closed)	Massachusetts
1 – 5 pm	State Hazard Mitigation Officers (closed)	Statler

**Wednesday, March 11**

<b>7:45 – 8:45 am</b>	<b>Breakfast</b>	<b>Senate</b>
<b>9 am – 4 pm</b>	<b>Registration</b>	<b>Pan American</b>
9 am – 12 pm	State Director Capitol Hill Visits Cont'd (Transportation on your own)	Capitol Hill
<b>10:30 – 11:30 am</b>	<b>Legal Counsel Committee</b>	<b>Congressional</b>
<b>11:30 am – 1 pm</b>	<b>Buffet Luncheon</b>	<b>Senate</b>
1 – 2:30 pm	NEMA Board of Directors Meeting	Congressional
3 – 5 pm	State Director Executive Session (closed)	Federal
4:30 – 8:30 pm	Exhibitor Set-up	Capital Terrace

**Thursday, March 12**

<b>7:30 – 8:30 am</b>	<b>Continental Breakfast</b>	<b>Senate/Congressional</b>
<b>7:30 am – 3:30 pm</b>	<b>Registration &amp; Exhibits</b>	<b>Pan American/Capital Terrace</b>
<b>8:30 – 8:45 am</b>	<b>Welcome and Opening Remarks</b> <b>Pledge of Allegiance; Roll Call of the States</b>	<b>Presidential Ballroom</b>
<b>8:45 – 9:15 am</b>	<b>FEMA Review Council Update</b> Kevin Guthrie, Review Council Member and Director, Florida Division of Emergency Management	<b>Presidential Ballroom</b>
<b>9:20 – 10:30 am</b>	<b>Thoughts and Reflections on FEMA Reform Efforts</b>	

The issue of FEMA reform continues to ring throughout the profession into 2026. The FEMA Review Council proposed legislation by the House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee, and countless recommendations from stakeholder partners

made emergency management one of the year's top news headlines. This two-part panel will offer a glimpse into recommendations from thought leaders and stakeholder partner input.

Moderator: John Benson, Director, Iowa Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management  
NEMA Legislative Committee Chair

Panel 1:

- Christopher Currie, Government Accountability Office
- Peter Muller, Pew Charitable Trust

Panel 2:

- Brett Mattson, National Association of Counties
- Shelby Kerns, National Association of State Budget Officers
- Renee Antoine, National Governors Association

<b>10:30 – 10:45 am</b>	<b>Networking Break</b>	<b>Capital Terrace</b>
<b>10:45 – 11:15 am</b>	<b>Karen Evans, Acting Administrator, Federal Emergency Management Agency (invited)</b>	<b>Presidential Ballroom</b>
<b>11:15 – 11:45 am</b>	<b>Ken Graham, Director, National Weather Service</b>	<b>Presidential Ballroom</b>
<b>11:30 am – 1 pm</b>	<b>Luncheon (seated)</b>	<b>Senate/Congressional</b>
<b>1:30 – 2:30 pm</b>	<b>Legislative Committee</b>	<b>Presidential Ballroom</b>
<b>2:30 – 3 pm</b>	<b>Sponsors and Snacks</b>	<b>Capital Terrace</b>
<b>3 – 4 pm</b>	<b>EMAC Committee</b>	<b>Presidential Ballroom</b>
<b>Friday, March 13</b>		
<b>7:30 – 8:30 am</b>	<b>Continental Breakfast</b>	<b>Senate/Congressional</b>
<b>7:30 am – 3:30 pm</b>	<b>Registration &amp; Exhibits</b>	<b>Pan American/ Capital Terrace</b>
<b>8:30 – 9:15 am</b>	<b>Navigating Nation State Threats</b> General Thomas Carden, Vice Chief National Guard Bureau	<b>Presidential Ballroom</b>
<b>9:15 – 9:45 am</b>	<b>Networking Break</b>	<b>Capital Terrace</b>
<b>9:45 – 10:45 am</b>	<b>Lessons Learned from Recent Disasters</b>	<b>Presidential Ballroom</b>
	Wildfires, floods, and a typhoon wreaked havoc on communities and residents in 2025. This session will highlight how states are navigating challenges and changing policies to ensure effective and resilient recoveries.	

Moderator: Elizabeth Zimmerman, Senior Executive Advisor, IEM

Panelists:

- Christina Curry, Acting Director, California Office of Emergency Services
- Robert Ezelle, Director, Washington Emergency Management Division
- Bryan Fisher, Director, Alaska Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management

<b>11 am – 12 pm</b>	<b>Resilience Committee</b>	<b>Presidential Ballroom</b>
<b>11:30 am – 1:30 pm</b>	<b>Buffet Luncheon</b>	<b>Senate/Congressional</b>
<b>1 – 2 pm</b>	<b>Preparedness Committee</b>	<b>Presidential Ballroom</b>

<b>2:15 – 3:15 pm</b>	<b>Money Matters: Utilizing AI to Make Quantitative Investment and Mitigation Decisions</b>	<b>Presidential Ballroom</b>
Facing ever-tightening financial constraints, states must make the most informed resourcing decisions possible to get the highest return on their investments. From prioritizing proactive infrastructure maintenance to making impactful post-disaster mitigation decisions, AI-powered tools can help decision-makers quantify- and justify- the impact their dollars have across the emergency management lifecycle.		
Moderator: Kim Gajewski, Homeland Security Policy Manager, Google		
Panelists:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chris Hein, Field CTO and Technical Director, Google</li> <li>David Orr, Chief Digital Officer, AES Corporation</li> <li>Terence (Terry) O’Leary, Acting Commissioner, New York State Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services</li> </ul>		
<b>3:15 – 3:30 pm</b>	<b>Break</b>	<b>Capital Terrace</b>
<b>3:30 – 4:30 pm</b>	<b>Private Sector Committee</b>	<b>Presidential Ballroom</b>
4:45 – 5 pm	State Director Action Meeting (closed)	Statler
6 pm	Past Presidents Committee (closed)	Off-Site
6:30 pm	Sponsor/Exhibitor tear-down	Capital Terrace
<b><u>Saturday, March 14</u></b>		
<b>7:30 – 8:30 am</b>	<b>Continental Breakfast</b>	<b>Senate/Congressional</b>
<b>7:30 am – 12 pm</b>	<b>Registration</b>	<b>Pan American</b>
<b>8:30 – 9 am</b>	<b>Partner Spotlight: American Red Cross</b> Brad Kieserman, Vice President, Operations and Logistics American Red Cross	<b>Presidential Ballroom</b>
<b>9:05 – 9:30 am</b>	<b>Partner Spotlight: National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster</b> Rev. Dr. David Guadalupe EJ, Board Chair & Interim President & CEO National VOAD	<b>Presidential Ballroom</b>
<b>9:30 – 9:45 am</b>	<b>Break</b>	<b>Capital Terrace</b>
<b>9:45 – 10:45 am</b>	<b>Homeland Security Committee</b>	<b>Presidential Ballroom</b>
<b>11 am – 12 pm</b>	<b>Response and Recovery Committee</b>	<b>Presidential Ballroom</b>
<b>12 – 1:15 pm</b>	<b>Buffet Lunch</b>	<b>Senate/Congressional</b>
<b>1:30 – 2 pm</b>	<b>NEMA Business Session</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reports by Officers</li> <li>Voting on Committee Papers</li> </ul>	<b>Presidential Ballroom</b>
<b>2:30 – 4:30 pm</b>	State Director Executive Session (closed)	Federal