

**Statement of Dr. Jacqueline F. Brown
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Prince George's County Government
Government Reform Committee Hearing
Emergency Preparedness in the Nation's
Capital with an Emphasis on Grant
Management and Coordination
June 24, 2004**

Good Morning.

I am grateful for the opportunity to appear before you today to testify on emergency preparedness in the National Capital Region (NCR) with an emphasis on first responder grant management and coordination. This subject is crucial to Prince George's County where over 835,000 residents live and over 100 different dialects are spoken.

During fiscal years 2002 and 2003, Prince George's County received approximately \$10.4 million dollars in grant funding. Details of the funding use are as follows: Hazardous materials truck, decontamination supplies, decontamination vehicle, breathing air units, incident command training, incident command vehicles, radios, radiological detection unit, tanker unit, keycard control system, salaries, personal protective equipment (level A,B,C,D), Computer Aided Dispatch System upgrade, emergency management salaries, disease surveillance system, epidemiologic response plan, high speed internet connection, critical information network, training of key public health officials and citizen volunteer training.

There are several challenges in obtaining federal funding for emergency preparedness. Timeliness—there are delays in receiving money from the state. Once the federal government decides how much each state is to receive, the state must then determine the recipient amount to be awarded. The assessment phase should be a clearly defined process. In 2003, a state assessment was conducted. There were limited resources available to assist the County in preparing for the completion of this process. This assessment has been and continues to be the qualifying factor for funding over the last two years without any opportunity for adjustments.

