



A Policy Forum: Building America's Resilience to Hazards
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Hurricane Katrina's landfall triggered a major U.S. catastrophe in human and dollar terms – some 1000-2000 deaths, immeasurable human suffering, and accompanying strains on the national social fabric; the possible loss of an iconic national subculture; as much as half a trillion dollars in property destruction and economic disruption.

The Policy Forum will answer:

- For years, even decades, experts have seen this disaster coming, not just in broad terms, but in some detail. *Why were these warnings unheeded?*
- The Katrina scenario is not unique. Many other cities and regions of the United States face natural hazards and future calamities of comparable or greater consequence, which are just as inevitable. *What can and should be done to lessen both the scope and impact of these slowly brewing disasters?*
- On a considerably shorter time frame – the few days immediately before, during, and just after Katrina's landfall – decision makers and policy officials operated in an information deficit. *What actions are needed to build the decision support infrastructure required for emergency response and recovery on this scale?*
- Private enterprise – both the large corporations and the small businesses in this region – represented not only a major vulnerability (hundreds of thousands in the region lost their jobs; worldwide, energy prices spiked; international access to U.S. grain exports was interrupted), but also a great, largely untapped asset for rebuilding and recovery – and for a host of disaster reduction actions far prior to any catastrophe. *In the short run, how can private enterprise best be given the tools it needs to rebuild? Over the longer term, how can the private sector engage more fully, and more effectively, in disaster prevention, preparedness, and recovery actions nationwide?*

The Forum will be organized by the following steps:

- At the Forum, participants will discuss the questions in both **plenary and breakout sessions**
- During the Forum, findings and recommendations will be developed and written into a **final report and highlights document**
- Next steps, including **implementation of the recommendations**, will be discussed

The implementation plan will include:

- **Massive distribution** of the report and highlights document to appropriate local, state, and federal officials, including Congress, as well as, to appropriate colleagues in the academic, public, and private sectors pertaining to Hurricane Katrina
- **Publication of an article in the Bulletin of the AMS (BAMS)** about the Forum findings and recommendations
- **A Congressional briefing or Science seminar** if it is fitting for the recommendations (The AMS, as a 501-C3 organization, does not lobby, but seeks to inform and educate our government officials and their staff on the most recent science breakthroughs.)

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