

Introduction

The Earthquake Hazards Reduction Act of 1977 (Public Law 95-124) proposes to reduce the risk to life and property from future earthquakes by establishing and maintaining an earthquake hazards reduction program. The Act also required that an implementation plan be submitted to Congress within 210 days of enactment. That has been done, and the plan is included in this paper as an appendix.

This paper identifies 14 basic issues or conflicts with which the implementation plan must cope in order to achieve its objectives. These issues and the associated questions developed under each of them in the text comprise criteria which may be useful to Congress in its evaluation of the plan.

The issues, while all basic to a successful program, are arranged in a rough descending order of their importance to a successful program.

1. Federal vs. State and Local Responsibilities
2. Earthquake vs. An All Natural Hazards Strategy
3. Narrowing Choices v's. Widening Choices: The Acquisition of Information
4. Narrowing Choices vs. Widening choices: The Role of Dissemination and Utilization of Knowledge
5. Engineering Design vs. Socioeconomic Strategies
6. Life Safety vs, Property Value-Oriented Programs: Balancing Needs
 - i. Life Safety vs. Property Value-Oriented Programs: Hazardous Buildings
 - s. Federal Regulations Overriding Conflicting State Law vs. State-by-State Resolution: Building Codes
9. Prediction vs. Present Capabilities
10. The Picture of the Present vs. The Images of the Future: Choosing Alternatives
11. The Picture of the Present vs. The Images of the Future: Resolving Ambiguities
12. The "Normal" Disaster vs. The Catastrophe
13. Interagency Conflicts: New vs. Existing Agencies
14. Urgency of Need vs. Limited Capabilities

The issues are treated in this sequence in the summary (pages 3-6) and in expanded form in the text, pages 17 to 36.