Senate WRDA Blunt/Nelson Amendment

As you know the Senate passed a Resilient Construction Technique Amendment to the WRDA (Water Resources Development Act) sponsored by Senators Roy Blunt (R-MO) and Bill Nelson (D-FL). The amendment was adopted by unanimous consent and will be included in any WRDA Conference Committee – a summary of the amendment is as follows:

Creates Federal Definition of "Resilient Construction Technique" –

The term ''resilient construction technique'' means a construction method that—

(1) allows a property—

(A) to resist hazards brought on by a major disaster; and

(B) to continue to provide the primary functions of the property after a major disaster;

(2) reduces the magnitude or duration of a disruptive event to a property; and

(3) has the absorptive capacity, adaptive capacity, and recoverability to withstand a potentially disruptive event.

By establishing a definition in law of resilient construction technique, it creates opportunities to expand use of resilient construction in other legislative vehicles, and provides opportunities when discussing with states and localities.

In addition, the amendment adds resilient construction in 2 critical studies:

Sec. 11001 - National Academy of Sciences – conduct study to "*make recommendations relating to infrastructure and coastal restoration options for reducing risk to human life and property from extreme weather events"* including

(2) an analysis of—
(A) historical extreme weather events;
(B) the ability of existing infrastructure to mitigate risks associated with extreme weather events; and
(C) **the reduction in long-term costs and vulnerability to infrastructure through the use of resilient construction techniques.**

Sec. 11002 - U.S. Government Accountability Office – study on management of flood, drought and storm damage, including:

(6) **any recommendations on the use of resilient construction techniques to reduce future vulnerability from flood, storm, and drought conditions**;