

Congressman Mike Thompson

Representing California's 5th Congressional District

P R E S S R E L E A S E

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REP. MIKE THOMPSON URGES NAPA RESIDENTS TO APPLY FOR EARTHQUAKE RETROFIT GRANTS

NAPA EARTHQUAKE BRACE + BOLT REGISTRATION ENDS MARCH 22

NAPA, CA – U.S. Rep. Mike Thompson (CA-5) and the California Earthquake Authority (CEA) today encouraged Napa homeowners to apply for grants of up to \$3,000 made available by the Napa Earthquake Brace + Bolt Program (Napa EBB) to help strengthen their homes against earthquake damage. Registration for the grants, which are funded in part by a grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), is open through March 22, 2016.

The Napa EBB helps pay for seismic retrofits to houses that are most vulnerable to catastrophic damage in an earthquake: pre-1979 houses that aren't bolted to their foundations, include a crawl space and have unbraced "cripple walls" (low walls between the foundation and first floor). In a strong earthquake, the crawl space is vulnerable to collapse, causing the home to slide off its foundation. Typical retrofits cost between \$3,000 and \$7,000 and involve bolting a house to its foundation and adding plywood or OSB bracing around the perimeter of the crawl space.

"A brace and bolt retrofit can help prevent catastrophic damage to homes in a major earthquake," said Thompson. **"I encourage all Napa residents to take advantage of this opportunity and apply for Napa EBB grants to ensure that their home will be better prepared to withstand the next earthquake."**

"Having earthquake insurance and completing seismic retrofits are two of the most effective steps homeowners can take to prepare for an earthquake," said Glenn Pomeroy, chief executive officer of the California Earthquake Authority (CEA). **"Also, this seismic retrofit would qualify a homeowner who lives in an older house for a discount on CEA earthquake insurance premium of up to 20 percent."**

Napa EBB registration is open for homes in 94558 and 94559 ZIP Codes. Homeowners can find out if their home qualifies and apply through March 22nd by going to NapaBraceBolt.com. For homeowners, the Napa EBB grants are tax-free on both the state and federal levels.

CEA is a publicly managed, privately funded, not-for-profit organization that provides residential earthquake insurance and works to encourage all Californians to take steps to reduce their risk of earthquake loss. CEA and the Governor's Office of Emergency Services established the California Residential Mitigation Program (CRMP) to help Californians strengthen their homes against damage from earthquakes. EBB is the first program developed by CRMP.

CEA recently closed registration for \$4.8 million in grants in 18 cities in Northern and Southern California, under its Earthquake Brace + Bolt Program (EBB), which was funded by the State of California and the CEA. More than 4,400 homeowners qualified for 1600 spots.

On August 24, 2014, a magnitude-6.0 earthquake struck the Napa, Solano and Sonoma County area at approximately 3:20 a.m. According to the U.S. Geological Survey, the epicenter was three miles from American Canyon, six miles from Napa, and eight miles from Sonoma. The earthquake was the largest to hit the Bay Area in 25 years. The earthquake damaged more than 1,500 homes and caused an estimated \$362 million in damage to private homes and commercial properties, according to Napa County and the City of Napa.

Following the earthquake, Rep. Thompson helped secure Presidential approval of Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Individual Assistance (IA) disaster funds and Public Assistance (PA) disaster funds as well as Small Business Administration (SBA) loans.

Congressman Mike Thompson is proud to represent California's 5th Congressional District, which includes all or part of Contra Costa, Lake, Napa, Solano and Sonoma Counties. He is a senior member of the House Ways and Means Committee. Rep. Thompson is also a member of the fiscally conservative Blue Dog Coalition and chairs the bipartisan, bicameral Congressional Wine Caucus.

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