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**Homeowner Registration Opens for 2017 Earthquake Brace + Bolt Program:
MORE CITIES, MORE HOMEOWNERS, MORE MONEY**

SACRAMENTO, Calif., Jan. 25, 2017 – Today the 2017 Earthquake Brace + Bolt (EBB) program opened registration for \$6 million in grants for seismic retrofits. This represents a 25 percent increase in funding over last year, to help California homeowners protect their families and secure their older homes against a catastrophic earthquake.

Beginning today and continuing through February 27, homeowners in 141 eligible ZIP Codes in 33 cities can register online to receive up to \$3,000 toward a code-compliant seismic retrofit.

In its fourth year, EBB is expanding its retrofit effort to reduce risk to the most vulnerable homes on all fronts:

- More high-risk areas are included;
- More funds are available to retrofit more homes; and
- More FEMA-trained contractors are performing the retrofit work.

The ZIP Codes included are those facing the highest risk of residential earthquake damage. Risk is determined by combining local geological hazard with the vulnerability of older homes and the construction type.

This year EBB is funded by \$3 million from the California Earthquake Authority (CEA) and \$3 million from the State of California. California Insurance Commissioner Dave Jones and Assemblymember Adrin Nazarian (D-Sherman Oaks) were instrumental in securing the state appropriation for the second year in a row.

“This program provides grants that go directly to homeowners so that they can protect their assets and their families,” said Insurance Commissioner Dave Jones. “Now thanks to the leadership of Assemblymember Adrin Nazarian, more Californians are able to take advantage of the Earthquake Brace + Bolt program, which means fewer Californians are at risk of financial and emotional devastation when an earthquake hits.”

“Expanding the Brace + Bolt program to 1,000 new homes is an important step forward in preparing California for a large earthquake,” stated Assemblymember Adrin Nazarian. “Bracing and bolting homes to their foundation can help protect property and save lives. I look forward to continuing our work with Governor Jerry Brown, Insurance Commissioner Dave Jones and the Legislature to make further improvements to Californians’ seismic safety.”

Susan Peabody, a homeowner in Studio City, applied for a grant after learning about EBB through a mailer from Assemblymember Nazarian. “This retrofit had been on our wish list for years but we didn’t know where to start and were worried it would be too expensive,” she said. “We selected a contractor from the EBB site and when we had questions, the people at EBB responded quickly. The whole process was so easy!”

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EBB grants are available for houses built before 1979 that include a crawl space with unbraced “cripple walls” (low walls between the foundation and first floor) and are not bolted to the foundation. In a strong earthquake, an unbolted house can topple off its foundation and unbraced cripple walls make the crawl space vulnerable to collapse. CEA estimates there are more than 1.2 million of these houses in high-hazard areas in Northern and Southern California.

Despite Gains, New CEA Research Finds Homeowners Awareness of Retrofitting Lags

Since the magnitude 6.0 Napa earthquake in August 2014, the CEA has been studying both homeowner attitudes and how their homes performed in the quake. The research was conducted in two parts—the first phase was an online questionnaire completed by more than 600 Napa residents and the second qualitative phase included 39 in-person interviews and house inspections.

The recently completed qualitative phase of the CEA Napa Research revealed a lack of awareness among homeowners about retrofitting. Specifically, the interviews found:

- One third of owners did not know whether or not their house had been retrofitted.
- Others thought their houses were retrofitted when they were not.
- Several respondents believed their houses had been adequately retrofitted because their chimney was braced.
- Many homeowners underestimated the benefits of retrofitting.

“This study underscores the importance of our ongoing effort to educate homeowners about exactly what a retrofit is and how an older house can benefit,” said Janiele Maffei, Chief Mitigation Officer of CEA and Executive Director of EBB. “After the Napa quake, we saw quite a bit of cripple wall damage. As a result, some families were not back in their homes even a year later and others had hundreds of thousands of dollars in repairs.”

How to Apply for EBB Grants

Registration is open through February 27. Full program rules, detailed requirements, a complete list of ZIP Codes, educational videos, registration and a Contractor Directory are all available on the program website, EarthquakeBraceBolt.com.

EBB ZIP codes fall within the following cities:

Northern California

Albany
Berkeley
Burlingame
Colma
Daly City
El Cerrito
Emeryville
Eureka
Hayward
Hillsborough
Millbrae
Oakland

Piedmont
Redwood City
San Bruno
San Francisco
San Leandro
San Lorenzo
San Mateo
Watsonville
Woodside

Southern California

Altadena
Alhambra
Claremont
Los Angeles
Pasadena
Redlands
Santa Barbara
San Bernardino
San Marino
Santa Monica
South Pasadena
West Hollywood

About the California Residential Mitigation Program (CRMP)

CRMP is a joint powers authority created in 2011 by the California Earthquake Authority (CEA) and the California Governor’s Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) to help Californians strengthen their homes against damage from earthquakes. Earthquake Brace + Bolt is a program of the CRMP.