

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-7012

November 19, 2009

The Honorable Janet Napolitano
Secretary of Homeland Security
Department of Homeland Security
Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear Secretary Napolitano:

Per our previous conversation, I would like to express my strenuous objections to the planned Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) National Level Exercise 2010 in Las Vegas in May, 2010.

In the midst of the worst recession our country has experienced since the Great Depression, Las Vegas has been hit hard by a decrease in tourism revenue. Statewide, unemployment has risen to levels well above the national average, and families in Las Vegas continue to suffer from a widespread foreclosure crisis. At a time when Las Vegas is beginning to recover from these economic ills, to simulate a nuclear detonation in the heart of the city would unacceptably harm the Southern Nevadan economy. Members of the business community and the gaming industry, including the Nevada Chambers of Commerce, the Nevada Development Authority, the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority, and the Hotel and Lodging Association have all expressed unanimous opposition to the current proposed scenario.

I am deeply sympathetic to the need of our first responders to conduct preparedness training, and I look forward to revisiting this issue when Nevada's economy has improved. However, at this time, economic recovery efforts would be stymied, or reversed entirely, by artificially creating anxiety surrounding tourism and investment in Las Vegas. I strongly and respectfully urge you to reconsider the current plans for the National Level Exercise 2010.

Sincerely,



HARRY REID
United States Senator