



NEWS RELEASE

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Board discusses Dec. 2 emergency response at NACo conference



The horrific terrorist attack on Dec. 2, 2015 in San Bernardino that took the lives of 14 people and wounded 22 others led to an unprecedented governmental emergency response by the San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors.

Today, Board Chairman James Ramos and Second District Supervisor Janice Rutherford shared their experiences during the workshop “Emergency Management Continuum: Lessons Learned for Elected Officials in Response and Recovery” at the National Association of Counties Legislative Conference in Washington D.C. Vice Chairman Robert Lovingood attended the discussion.

The supervisors participated to help other elected and public officials prepare for emergencies in case they are ever impacted by a similar crisis in their own communities. The workshop discussion ranged from how to seek emergency state and federal funding to providing support to employees throughout a crisis.

“Counties try to be prepared to respond to various types of natural emergencies. However these days we are also tasked with being prepared for active shooter situations like the one we went through on Dec. 2,” Ramos said. “Having the ability to share the lessons learned from what worked to what didn’t is critical to minimize lives lost.”

“First, we had to take steps to ensure our County employees were safe,” Ramos said. “We also utilized the Military Surplus 1033 Program which helped provide the County with helicopter capabilities to transport injured victims from the scene to local hospitals. Monies from the Sheriff Department’s asset seizures were also used to purchase the armored vehicles that were used to help search for the assailants on that day.”

Rutherford emphasized the importance of documenting everything that occurs during an emergency, especially when seeking reimbursement from the state and federal government. She also talked about how important it was to give employees time to grieve and rest following a tragedy.

“Little things like having your employees’ current emergency contact information can make a big difference in a crisis situation like we faced on Dec. 2,” Rutherford said. “We have learned a lot since that horrible day. It was a privilege to share our experiences and lessons learned with our fellow county representatives today.”

“Our County received an outpouring of support from around the world after Dec. 2 and we feel an obligation to share what we learned with others if it can save lives and help others in the future,” Lovingood said.