

**Statement in Support of Voluntary Assessment & Certification Program for
Private Sector Emergency Management & Business Continuity
in Senate Bill 4**

March 2, 2007

We the undersigned agree that there is a clear need for a voluntary program to assess private sector emergency management and business continuity programs including the opportunity to certify conformity to national preparedness standard if the company so desires. We support Senate Bill 4's call for such a program and believe that the program should have the following elements:

- **Voluntary in Nature:** We believe that such a program should be voluntary on the part of business and definitely not a general regulatory requirement.
- **Independent of Government:** While government may choose to endorse and/or designate one or more programs which certify emergency management and business continuity, these programs should exist independently of government.
- **Consensus-Based Reflecting Private Sector Stakeholders:** Any accreditation body should reflect a consensus-based approach which includes a majority of private sector representatives.
- **The Program Must Be Scalable for Different Sized Businesses & Different Industries:** The standard should be general in scope and allow a business to determine how it wishes to address criteria (performance based not prescriptive in nature) and should not require a full management system approach.
- **Protects Proprietary and Confidential Information:** The process should provide safeguards to protect information that is propriety and confidential to the business.
- **Allows for Self-Assessment as well as Second and Third Party Assessment:** We support the establishment of a program which would provide the option to a company of all of the following:
 - (a) self-assess its own program and self-declare its conformity with a one or more preparedness standards (first party assessment),
 - (b) allow an interested party such as a key customer to assess a business' program (second party assessment) or
 - (c) allow an independent third party to assess and certify its emergency preparedness and business continuity program (third party assessment).
- **Address any Potential Conflicts of Interest:** Prohibit any entities with conflicts of interest from conducting any accreditations and/or certifications.
- **Be Constituted Appropriately:** Such program should be administered by one or more bodies which have been constituted appropriately based upon voluntary consensus-based standards approach and include sufficient liability insurance.
- **Facilitate Market-Based Incentives where Feasible** including benefits in mitigating legal liability, acknowledgement in insurance (voluntary on part of the insurance companies), and rating agency consideration by inviting involvement by representatives from these industries into the program development and operations process.

In support:

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| • Deere & Company (John Deere) | • Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. |
| • The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company | • The International Center for Enterprise Preparedness, New York University |
| • Raytheon Company | |