Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

October 11, 2012

Jeffrey Zients
Acting Director
Office of Management and Budget
Executive Office of the President
Eisenhower Executive Office Building
1650 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20503

Dear Director Zients:

As you work with the United States Geological Survey (USGS) to craft its fiscal year 2014 budget request, we urge that you support the Earthquake Hazards Program and the Global Seismic Network at the highest possible level. As Members of Congress representing districts in the United States at risk from earthquake hazards, we are concerned with the deteriorating fiscal health of these programs. These modest investments will ensure USGS is able to continue its crucial mission of protecting the nation from earthquake hazards.

As you know, earthquakes are a serious threat to the United States, with over 75 million people in 39 states living in areas of significant earthquake risk. In the wake of recent devastating national and international earthquake events, it is critical the United States maintains its vigilance and expertise in earthquake research. The USGS provides seismic monitoring and scientific programs that serve the entire nation.

USGS, with its university partners, should work toward developing an earthquake-early warning system, such as those in Mexico and Japan. An earthquake early-warning system would allow people and businesses enough time to prepare for an earthquake event and, thereby, potentially minimize loss. In addition, it is vital USGS continue to develop new products and services that benefit all Americans. For example, last year's magnitude 5.8 earthquake in central Virginia, highlighted the need for continued USGS investments in east-coast earthquake hazard research and assessment, including permanent seismic stations. USGS also should continue to invest in research on induced seismicity. These critical investments cannot be pursued unless robust funding for the USGS Earthquake Hazards Program and the Global Seismic Network is maintained.

The need to address the national debt is real, but accomplishing this task should not be done at the expense of programs that protect lives and property. As such, we respectfully request that you support USGS's Earthquake Hazard Program and Global Seismic Network in the FY 2014 budget request.

Sincerely,

Ken Calvert
Member of Congress

Adam B. Schiff
Member of Congress

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Brian Bilbray
Member of Congress

Judy Chu
Member of Congress

Elton Gallegly
Member of Congress

Grace Napolitano
Member of Congress

Laura Richardson
Member of Congress

Janice Hahn
Member of Congress

Karen Bass
Member of Congress

Zoe Lofgren
Member of Congress

Pete Stark
Member of Congress

Maxine Waters
Member of Congress

Susan Davis
Member of Congress

Anna Eshoo
Member of Congress

Suzanne Bonamici
Member of Congress

Barbara Lee
Member of Congress

Jackie Speier
Member of Congress

Howard Berman
Member of Congress

Henry Waxman
Member of Congress

Lucille Roybal-Allard
Member of Congress

Linda Sanchez
Member of Congress

Bob Filner
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Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress

Michael Honda
Member of Congress

Lois Capps
Member of Congress

Doris Matsui
Member of Congress

Brad Sherman
Member of Congress

Jerry McNerney
Member of Congress

Sam Farr
Member of Congress

CC: Craig Crutchfield, Chief, Interior Branch
Melanie Stansbury, Program Examiner