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February 27, 2020

Assemblymember Adrin Nazarian
California State Assembly
Sacramento, CA

Subject: Earthquake Engineering Research Institute's Support for AB 1997

Dear Assemblymember Nazarian:

On behalf of the Earthquake Engineering Research Institute (EERI), I am writing to express our **strong support** for California Assembly Bill 1997 – Building codes: earthquake safety: functional recovery standard.

EERI is a nonprofit society of experts dedicated to reducing earthquake risk. In this role, we advocate for comprehensive and realistic measures for reducing the harmful effects of earthquakes. Our membership includes professionals in a wide range of seismic safety-related scientific and design disciplines, including but not limited to architects, planners, social scientists, seismologists, structural engineers, geotechnical engineers, and public policy professionals.

Current California building codes uphold a “life safety” standard by which a building is expected to protect its occupants but not be reusable after an earthquake. With such a large and interdependent economy and population, EERI believes that California needs to address how efficiently communities will function after a major earthquake. California Assembly Bill 1997 requires the California Building Standards Commission to assemble a functional recovery working group to consider whether a “functional recovery” standard is warranted for all or some building occupancy classifications in the state and identify practical means of implementing this standard. The working group would take into account findings from the forthcoming NIST report. “Functional recovery” means that a building’s structure, architecture finishes, and systems would maintain their integrity, or could be restored, to support basic functions of the building’s pre-earthquake use within a maximum acceptable time. **EERI believes that a functional recovery standard is an important and necessary step to improved seismic resilience of communities and housing preservation following earthquakes. New design and construction requirements will support California's broader disaster resilience and mitigation goals in the future.**

AB 1997 names EERI as a member of the working group that will consider this “functional recovery” standard for California buildings. We welcome participation in this working group with diverse stakeholder representation, and expect that a consensus-based recommendation will emerge that identifies appropriate and practical directions for the California Building Code to enhance earthquake resilience. We maintain that this is a vital investigation that will result in improved seismic safety for *all* California residents.

This is your chance to make an indelible mark on the earthquake resilience of California, and we urge you to support this advancement of earthquake resilience. Thank you for considering our position on this important piece of legislation. Please let us know how EERI can offer any further support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Laurie A. Johnson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Laurie A. Johnson
President