



NEWS

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Governor Christie and State Homeland Security Director Gather Officials to Discuss Issues Facing New Jersey
-Former Gov. Tom Kean and Former FEMA Director James Lee Witt Offer National Perspective-

NEW BRUNSWICK – Governor Chris Christie and Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness Director Charles McKenna today convened a homeland security conference for more than 400 law enforcement, homeland security and emergency management professionals from various federal, state and local government agencies. This year’s annual conference is part of New Jersey’s activities planned for the U.S. Department of Homeland Security’s National Preparedness Month.

“As I have said over the past few weeks, keeping our state and our citizens safe is my administration’s top priority,” Governor Christie said. “While there are many lessons to be learned from the state’s response to Hurricane Irene, the most important lesson gained from the events of the past month is that we all have a role to play in our state’s emergency preparedness planning. Adhering to those responsibilities ensures individual safety and eases the burden placed on our brave law enforcement, emergency personnel, and first-responders who work the frontlines to help keep us safe.”

The conference, themed “*New Jersey Homeland Security - Looking Back/Thinking Ahead*,” addressed the multitude of challenges facing New Jersey’s homeland security and emergency preparedness efforts, and focused on the following critical areas: protecting critical infrastructure, bolstering cyber security, and strengthening partnerships between law enforcement and the private sector. Former New Jersey Governor Tom Kean, who also served as Chairman of the 9/11 Commission delivered this year’s keynote address. James Lee Witt, former Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) also spoke at the conference and discussed the changes in disaster response since the 9/11 attacks.

“This year’s conference is appropriately timed - given that it comes not long after we marked the 10th anniversary of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks and with portions of the state still working to recover from Hurricane Irene’s destruction – and reinforces the importance of our preparedness mission, McKenna said. Consistent with the Governor’s mandate, this annual gathering is a culmination of our daily efforts to build and enhance public and private sector partnerships, and hearing directly from national leaders like Tom Kean and James Lee Witt helps us, and our partner agencies better protect the people and the property of this state.”

The New Jersey Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness (OHSP) was created in 2006. OHSP is responsible for leading the state’s counter-terrorism and preparedness efforts across all levels of government and the private sector. OHSP oversees and distributes discretionary state and federal homeland security and emergency preparedness funds on behalf of New Jersey. More information about OHSP can be found at www.njhomelandsecurity.gov.

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