

Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee Testimony
12/3/12

DEP Commissioner's testimony occurs at time 2:30 in the following web-stream:

<http://new.livestream.com/accounts/1150051/events/1706940>

Senator Gordon's proposed legislation, S 2208: Amends "Flood Hazard Area Control Act" to require DEP to take certain actions concerning delineations of flood hazard areas and floodways.

http://www.njleg.state.nj.us/2012/Bills/S2500/2208_I1.PDF

Transcription:

Senator Gordon

Welcome Commissioner. I'd like to touch on three points.

We've been talking about elevation standards and mitigation and smart rebuilding. And I think you and I know we've had a conversation about flood maps.

It was brought to my attention - long before the storm - that in some flood prone communities there are planning board hearings now on large projects that the local residents think have a potential for exacerbating the flood situation there and yet the engineers are saying that "we're using the DEP approved flood maps and that those maps indicate that we can do what we are proposing".

On further investigation, we find that these flood maps were released in the early 1980's and I'm told were based on data from the late 1970's.

When I introduced legislation to call for an updating of these flood maps I got a cost estimate back indicating that it would cost \$81 million to do this - which I interpreted as a comment from DEP that you really don't want to do this.

Commissioner Martin (interrupting)

When was that Senator? When was that?

Senator Gordon

This was in the last few months - a couple of months, I believe.

Martin

OK... That didn't come from me - so...

Gordon

Well the point I guess that I'm really trying to make is that if we are talking about rebuilding in a smart way we need to use good data.

We can't rely on flood maps that go back to the Jimmy Carter era, or we're just asking for more trouble. So I just throw that out there.

Martin

Senator, just so you know, there is a project we have underway right now that's updating several of those maps. I'm not sure which areas are – because we try to carry – most of those are in the Passaic basin that we've been looking at. So I can follow-up specifically on that...

Gordon

I know that this is a large task, but it's something that I think we need to do.

Martin

Yes

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