

A Florida Hurricane and Tornado Warning Improvement Program (Florida HTWIP)

While much work has and will be done by the Florida legislature to respond to the increasing cost of insurance in Florida, long term reduction of risks associated with severe windstorm and hurricane losses will take a comprehensive and continuing effort. This Windstorm Mitigation Study Committee is a good step in the right direction. These efforts to identify reasonable windstorm and hurricane loss prevention and mitigation strategies must be ongoing, however, to have a significant affect on the lives of Florida citizens and risks they face every hurricane and tornado season.

While initially conceived as a Risk and Rate Reduction Authority associated with the Governor's office (see the attached), a continuing program, wherever it is associated, needs to be undertaken to respond to Florida's unique windstorm risks (hurricanes and tornados) and to look for ways to leverage Florida's resources to maximize federal proactive programs and funding initiatives to reduce risks. Such a State program might be called the Florida Hurricane and Tornado Warning Improvement Program (Florida HTWIP).

While efforts such as the National Science Board (publication of the hurricane report calling for a National Hurricane Research Initiative) and the development by leading hurricane experts of the Hurricane Intensity Forecast Improvement and Impacts Projections (HiFi) Program proposal are significant, the financial commitments must be made now of the benefits of such efforts will not be timely for Florida.

Such a program would need to have a directed by the state's Climatologist or other appropriate State official (s) who meet as the Florida HTWIP program management team and work in coordination with the Division of Emergency Management and a well regarding science advisory council.

The Florida HTWIP mission might be to:

- Identify and recommend short and long term mitigation strategies and research that will lead to mitigation strategies useful to Florida.
- Identify state, national, and international programs and opportunities to reduce and mitigate windstorm risks and losses.

Integration of the Florida HTWIP activities with those related state activities as described by the attached Risk and Rate Reduction Authority conceptual draft paper would need to be considered and planned for as part of the program authorization. It is fully expected that such a Florida HTWIP proposal would be further revised and merged with other program proposals considered by the WMSC.