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## **San Francisco Mayor Edwin Lee and Oakland Mayor Jean Quan Kick off Forum on Earthquake Risk**

### Leaders Hail Progress Made in Preparing for “The Big One” But Caution that More Work Remains

San Francisco, CA – San Francisco Mayor Edwin Lee and Oakland Mayor Jean Quan jointly opened the Seismic Risk Mitigation Leadership Forum in San Francisco today, praising the more than 300 gathered delegates for their commitment to making America more resilient to earthquakes. Scientists, emergency management professionals and public policy makers discussed the lessons to be learned from deadly earthquakes that have recently ravaged Japan, Haiti, Chile and New Zealand.

The two mayors outlined the extensive coordination they have undertaken in jointly preparing their cities for the major earthquake they both say is overdue and said this pre-disaster coordination will be critical to helping their cities better survive a deadly quake.

Both mayors expressed a strong commitment to supporting the region’s residents most at risk, physically and financially. “After visiting New Orleans two years after Katrina, and seeing the devastation that was still in place, I made a personal promise that I would not abandon poor neighborhoods after a major earthquake,” said Mayor Lee. “We are only a truly resilient city when all of our neighborhoods are prepared and ready for the next disaster,” said Mayor Lee.

Mayor Quan said she is also working hard to help more vulnerable neighborhoods in Oakland better withstand a major earthquake. “What we saw in Katrina was the tragic loss of an entire community with the destruction of the 9<sup>th</sup> Ward,” said Quan. “We have neighborhoods in Oakland that are similarly vulnerable largely because residents don’t have the resources to retrofit homes and make them more earthquake resistant. These neighborhoods are the true heart and soul of our community and I want to help them be better prepared so they don’t find themselves so badly damaged after a major quake that they can’t rebuild.”

Other speakers at the opening session of the two-day Forum discussed the Tohoku earthquake and tsunami and provided an overview of the disaster’s impact and the recovery efforts still underway.

Recent scientific advances in the materials and technologies available to help structures better survive earthquakes were also discussed.

The Forum's second day will start with a morning panel evaluating the public policy challenges around managing seismic risk. Panelists will discuss whether building codes are enough to fortify communities while exploring tax incentives and other policy initiatives that would encourage more building owners to retrofit structures to better withstand earthquakes.

The Seismic Risk Mitigation Leadership Forum is the sixth in a series of forums sponsored by the Risk Sciences Foundation of RenaissanceRe Holdings Ltd. (NYSE: RNR), WeatherPredict Consulting, Inc., the Federal Alliance for Safe Homes (FLASH), and the Insurance Institute for Business and Home Safety (IBHS). Additional sponsors for the seismic forum include the Earthquake Engineering Research Institute (EERI) and the Pacific Earthquake Engineering Research Center (PEER).

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