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Earthquake Forum Assesses America's Readiness for Major Earthquake and Outlines Roadmap to Increasing Preparedness

San Francisco, CA – The Seismic Risk Mitigation Leadership Forum concluded in San Francisco this week after two full days of panel discussions on a wide range of topics relating to America's readiness to withstand a major earthquake. Elected leaders, leading scientists and emergency managers discussed emerging technologies that can make buildings more earthquake resistant. They also highlighted needed public policy changes that would spur greater investment in earthquake mitigation.

San Francisco Mayor Edwin Lee and Oakland Mayor Jean Quan jointly opened the Forum, praising the more than 300 gathered delegates for their commitment to bolstering America's readiness for a major earthquake. The two spoke of their commitment to ensuring that vulnerable populations are not overlooked in earthquake preparedness and response.

Stephen Weinstein, Chairman of the Risk Sciences Foundation of RenaissanceRe Holdings Ltd., (NYSE: RNR), the lead event sponsor, acknowledged the important contribution of the two Bay area mayors and FEMA's Region IX Director Nancy Ward, who also spoke at the Forum.

"We extend our sincere thanks to Mayors Lee and Quan and Director Ward, as well as all of the speakers, panelists and delegates for contributing to a resoundingly successful forum," said Weinstein. "We look forward to collaborating with the wide range of stakeholders that joined us in San Francisco in our ongoing effort to enhance the preparedness and resiliency of quake exposed regions."

Craig Tillman, President of WeatherPredict Consulting, Inc., a Forum co-sponsor, called the gathering an important opportunity to better understand the wide ranging impact of earthquake hazards. "The conversation started in San Francisco will certainly continue based on the strong appetite for collaboration from our delegates," said Tillman. "We also leave San Francisco with a strong collective sense that scientifically sound, strategic investments in mitigation need to be ramped up considerably in California and elsewhere in America. We only need to look overseas at the recent earthquake experience in Haiti, Chile, New Zealand and Japan to understand the significant benefits of that investment."

"Our role at FLASH is to provide families and individuals with sound, actionable ideas they can use to protect themselves and their homes from the damage caused by natural disasters such as earthquakes," said Leslie C. Henderson, President and CEO of the Federal Alliance for Safe Homes (FLASH), a leading non-profit organization devoted to disaster safety education. "We are honored to help lead the Seismic

Risk Leadership Forum, and look forward to sharing all we've learned with homeowners across the country."

"It is essential that the best minds and the most current technology be applied to building or retrofitting resilient homes, businesses and communities," said Julie Rochman, President of the Insurance Institute for Business and Home Safety (IBHS), another event co-sponsor. "There is no excuse not to provide better protection for earthquake-exposed populations, including the members of our communities who are most vulnerable, physically and financially."

San Francisco Bay-area co-sponsors of the Forum included the Earthquake Engineering Research Institute (EERI) and the Pacific Earthquake Engineering Research Center (PEER). Tom Tobin, President of EERI, highlighted recent advances in innovative techniques that are improving earthquake retrofitting and mitigation practices. "We have tools to improve public safety and make our communities socially and economically more resilient to earthquakes," said Tobin.

Stephen Mahin, Director of PEER, joined a panel that provided an update on the recent Tohoku earthquake and tsunami. "It is clear from the recent damage observed in Japan, as well as in Chile and New Zealand, that we have come a long way in developing technologies capable of achieving seismic safety in new construction," said Mahin. "More needs to be done to insure that these technologies are implemented in all regions vulnerable to earthquakes. We need to reduce risk associated with our stock of existing buildings, and construct new structures that are not just safe, but are resilient and can be restored to service in a short time."

The proceedings of the Seismic Risk Mitigation Leadership Forum will be available at www.mitigationleadership.com. This week's Forum was the sixth in the series of Risk Mitigation Leadership Forums and the first that addressed seismic risks.

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