



May 25, 2017

ICP Awards Program Office
Federal Emergency Management Agency
500 C St, SW
Washington, DC 20472

Re: Support for ICP Award Application from SABER

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of the Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency (“RIEMA”) and newly created Rhode Island Alliance for Business Resilience (“Alliance”), I am pleased to write in support of the application submitted by SABER, the Single Automated Business Exchange for Reporting, for an ICP Technology Innovation Award. SABER helps government help businesses reopen after disaster to serve their communities and speed their citizens’ return to normal.

Over the past few years the State of Rhode Island has recognized the important role that businesses play in helping communities recover from disasters. All our preparedness plans for communities and the neediest citizens focus on getting the community on its feet. To do that, the private sector must get back to business as soon as possible.

Government can only support this by fully knowing the status of its critical businesses – food, shelter, utilities, gas stations, pharmacies, building material suppliers, etc. Most recently, the State established an Emergency Support Function for business in the State Emergency Operations Center (ESF18). In addition, the State has worked very closely with the business community in establishing the Alliance, a new public-private partnership focused on business continuity and resilience (www.riabr.org).

SABER and its leader Jim Morentz have been working closely with the State during the startup of these initiatives in helping to provide the technology and know-how in setting up an easy and effective system to communicate with businesses during emergency events. SABER collects information on business status and provides it in an easy-to-use and readily available form. By sharing the status of business and critical infrastructure, SABER helps us to better understand our situation and prioritize our recovery efforts. The net results are threefold: 1) open businesses provide goods and services to the community during and after an emergency, 2) open businesses get people in the community back to work, and 3) open businesses help minimize the economic impact on the community after an event.

SABER is also an eager partner in preparedness through its support of exercises. Since 2014, it has supported FEMA’s national exercises as well as state-level exercises. SABER launches its SimCenter to simulate business disruptions. Cities, counties, states, and federal agencies have used this simulated status information to exercise how they prioritize business recovery, and by doing so, community recovery.

Perhaps most importantly, SABER has created a standard which is used by some of the largest retailers in the country, as well as states and local communities, to establish and implement these important communications functions. And all of this is done at no cost to the State, which allows it to allocate resources to use the SABER information to prepare for and recover from events of all kinds, in communities throughout the state.

I can't say enough about the help Jim Morentz has personally provided to us in our efforts to include the business community in our emergency planning and response efforts and the incalculable value that SABER has provided – mitigating the need for us to “do it ourselves.” SABER is a deserving candidate for the FEMA ICP Technology Innovation Award.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stuart Freiman". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Stuart Freiman, Project Manager
Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency
Rhode Island Alliance for Business Resilience