

**For immediate release:**

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**WESTERN STATES SEISMIC POLICY COUNCIL (WSSPC) HONORS  
DR. JOHN L. AHO WITH 2012 LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD**

**Sacramento** - The Western States Seismic Policy Council (WSSPC) Board of Directors and National Awards Selection Committee are pleased to announce that Dr. John L. Aho, Chairman of the Alaska Seismic Hazards Safety Commission, has been awarded a 2012 WSSPC Lifetime Achievement Award.

Dr. Aho is being recognized for his more than thirty five years of service as a dedicated leader in earthquake engineering and seismic risk reduction policy. His service to the State of Alaska includes work as an instructor for earthquake mitigation and post-earthquake safety evaluation, advisor to the University of Alaska Anchorage's engineering program, many years of service on the Municipality of Anchorage's Geotechnical Advisory Commission, and long-time chair of the Alaska Chapter of the Earthquake Engineering Research Institute. He also serves as Chairman of the Alaska Advisory Committee for the Advanced National Seismic System (ANSS) and in 2004 was awarded the Alaska Commendation Medal for his work in seismic risk mitigation. He was awarded an honorary Doctor of Sciences degree from the University of Alaska Anchorage in 2006 which cited his "service to the state, to the university, and to humankind".

He was a prime mover behind the establishment of a state seismic safety commission in Alaska over a period of 20 years, from 1985 when the first legislative bill was drafted to establish a multi-hazard Natural Hazards Safety Commission through 2005 when the first members of the Alaska Seismic Hazards Safety Commission were appointed. Throughout that time, John was unrelenting in his support of the creation of a state seismic safety commission, and gave eloquent testimony in favor of the legislation in every legislative hearing. John was elected chair of the Commission at the first meeting, a position he continues to hold.

Since the Commission's first meeting in 2005, John has guided it through an annual chartering process to solidify the commitment of its members to its seismic safety mission and goals. He has frequently briefed high-level state and local officials, legislators, and organizations on seismic hazard policies and the activities and priorities of the Commission for reducing Alaska's seismic risk. These groups have included the Alaska Partnership for Infrastructure Protection, Chugach Electric Association, Pioneers of Alaska, Local Emergency Planning Committee Association, and Elmendorf Air Force Base Alaskan Command and Joint Task Force.

WSSPC created the award to recognize an outstanding leader in earthquake risk reduction, who has demonstrated throughout his or her career an extraordinary commitment, level of service, and contribution to the application of earthquake risk reduction to public policy.

The Award will be presented April 11, 2012 at the National Earthquake Conference in Memphis, Tennessee.

A background summary of Dr. John Aho has been posted on the Western States Seismic Policy Council website: <http://wsspc.org/awards/current.shtml>

Western States Seismic Policy Council is a non-profit earthquake consortium located at 801 K Street, Suite 1436, Sacramento, CA 95814, 916-444-6816, [www.wsspc.org](http://www.wsspc.org).

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