

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 4669

To authorize and improve the Federal Emergency Management Agency and reform Federal disaster mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 23, 2025

Mr. GRAVES (for himself, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Mr. WEBSTER of Florida, and Mr. STANTON) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and in addition to the Committee on Homeland Security, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To authorize and improve the Federal Emergency Management Agency and reform Federal disaster mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.**

4 (a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the
5 “Fixing Emergency Management for Americans Act of
6 2025” or the “FEMA Act of 2025”.

1 (b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for
 2 this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

DIVISION A—ESTABLISHMENT OF FEMA AS CABINET-LEVEL
 INDEPENDENT AGENCY

TITLE I—ESTABLISHMENT OF FEDERAL EMERGENCY
 MANAGEMENT AGENCY

- Sec. 11. Establishment of independent agency.
- Sec. 12. Administrator; Deputy Administrator; other officials of the Agency.
- Sec. 13. Authority and responsibilities.
- Sec. 14. Office of the Inspector General.
- Sec. 15. Transfer of functions.
- Sec. 16. Personnel and other transfers.
- Sec. 17. Saving provisions.
- Sec. 18. References.
- Sec. 19. Federal Emergency Management Agency Working Capital Fund.
- Sec. 20. Improving disaster assistance for veterans.

TITLE II—OFFICES AND FUNCTIONS OF FEDERAL EMERGENCY
 MANAGEMENT AGENCY

- Sec. 21. National emergency management.

TITLE III—RELATED MATTERS

- Sec. 31. Changes to administrative documents.
- Sec. 32. Recommended legislation.

DIVISION B—FEMA REFORMS

TITLE I—PUBLIC ASSISTANCE REFORMS

- Sec. 101. Rebuilding public infrastructure.
- Sec. 102. Task force to address backlog of open declared disasters.
- Sec. 103. Disaster declaration damage thresholds.
- Sec. 104. Federal permitting improvement.
- Sec. 105. Unified Federal review.
- Sec. 106. Block grants for small disasters.
- Sec. 107. Common sense debris removal.
- Sec. 108. Disaster management costs modernization.
- Sec. 109. Streamlining and consolidating information collection and preliminary damage assessments.
- Sec. 110. Reasonable incident periods.
- Sec. 111. Fire management assistance program policy.
- Sec. 112. Indian tribal government eligibility.
- Sec. 113. Strengthening closeouts for critical services.
- Sec. 114. Sheltering of emergency response personnel.
- Sec. 115. Emergency protective measures to fight flooding damage.
- Sec. 116. Fairness and accountability in appeals.
- Sec. 117. Expedited funding for emergency work.
- Sec. 118. Consistency in procurement practices.

TITLE II—INDIVIDUAL ASSISTANCE REFORMS

- Sec. 201. Information sharing for Federal agencies.
- Sec. 202. Universal application for individual assistance.
- Sec. 203. Clarifying duplication of benefits.
- Sec. 204. Crisis counseling and addiction in disasters.
- Sec. 205. Repair and rebuilding.
- Sec. 206. FEMA emergency home repair program.
- Sec. 207. Direct assistance.
- Sec. 208. Accurate information to disaster victims.
- Sec. 209. Improved notices for FEMA assistance.
- Sec. 210. Common sense displacement assistance for disaster victims.
- Sec. 211. State-managed housing authority.
- Sec. 212. Improved rental assistance.
- Sec. 213. Online guides for postdisaster assistance.
- Sec. 214. Clarifying sheltering assistance eligibility.
- Sec. 215. Access to lifesaving non-congregate sheltering.
- Sec. 216. Assistance for total loss.

TITLE III—MITIGATION REFORMS

- Sec. 301. Preapproved project mitigation plans.
- Sec. 302. Reducing disaster costs and protecting lives.
- Sec. 303. Resilient buildings and communities.
- Sec. 304. Strengthening hazard risk reduction.
- Sec. 305. Utility resiliency.
- Sec. 306. Additional amendments to hazard mitigation revolving loan fund.
- Sec. 307. Streamlined hazard mitigation application process.
- Sec. 308. Study and report on mitigation benefits.

TITLE IV—TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

- Sec. 401. GAO review of FEMA transition.
- Sec. 402. Transparency and online accountability.
- Sec. 403. Prohibition on political discrimination.
- Sec. 404. Review of burdensome regulations and policies.
- Sec. 405. Report on assistance to individuals.
- Sec. 406. Individual assistance dashboard.
- Sec. 407. GAO report on preliminary damage assessments.
- Sec. 408. Improved rental assistance.
- Sec. 409. GAO assessment on identity theft and disaster fraud in disaster assistance programs.
- Sec. 410. GAO study on insurance utilization for public assistance-eligible facilities.
- Sec. 411. Study on wildfire management plans.
- Sec. 412. Effectiveness of local, State, territory, and Federal alerting systems.
- Sec. 413. GAO review of management costs.
- Sec. 414. Report on coordination of disaster assistance to individuals.
- Sec. 415. GAO review of cost savings associated with repair and rebuilding reforms.
- Sec. 416. Transparency for disaster declarations.
- Sec. 417. Fast-moving disasters working group.
- Sec. 418. Public assistance dashboard.
- Sec. 419. Improving disaster workforce retention.

1 **DIVISION A—ESTABLISHMENT**
2 **OF FEMA AS CABINET-LEVEL**
3 **INDEPENDENT AGENCY**
4 **TITLE I—ESTABLISHMENT OF**
5 **FEDERAL EMERGENCY MAN-**
6 **AGEMENT AGENCY**

7 **SEC. 11. ESTABLISHMENT OF INDEPENDENT AGENCY.**

8 (a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Federal Emergency Manage-
9 ment Agency is established as a cabinet-level independent
10 establishment in the executive branch.

11 (b) **MISSION.**—The primary mission of the Agency is
12 to reduce the loss of life and property of the Nation from
13 all hazards, including natural disasters and manmade dis-
14 asters, by leading and supporting the Nation in a com-
15 prehensive emergency management system of prepared-
16 ness, response, recovery, and mitigation.

17 (c) **SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES.**—In support of the primary
18 mission of the Agency, the Administrator of the Agency
19 shall—

20 (1) lead the Nation’s efforts to prepare for, re-
21 spond to, recover from, and mitigate against the risk
22 of natural disasters and manmade disasters, includ-
23 ing catastrophic incidents;

24 (2) to build a national system of emergency
25 management that can effectively and efficiently use

1 the full measure of the Nation’s resources to re-
2 spond to natural disasters and manmade disasters,
3 including catastrophic incidents, partner with—

4 (A) State, local, and Tribal governments;

5 (B) emergency response providers;

6 (C) other Federal agencies;

7 (D) the private sector; and

8 (E) nongovernmental organizations;

9 (3) develop a Federal response capability that,
10 when necessary and appropriate, can act effectively
11 and rapidly to deliver assistance essential to saving
12 lives or protecting or preserving property or public
13 health and safety in a natural disaster or manmade
14 disaster;

15 (4) integrate the emergency preparedness, re-
16 sponse, recovery, and mitigation responsibilities of
17 the Agency to confront effectively the challenges of
18 a natural disaster or manmade disaster;

19 (5) develop and maintain robust Regional Of-
20 fices, inclusive of regional disability integration spe-
21 cialists, that work with State, local, and Tribal gov-
22 ernments, emergency response providers, and other
23 appropriate entities to identify and address regional
24 priorities;

1 (6) provide funding, training, exercises, tech-
2 nical assistance, planning, and other assistance to
3 build the Tribal, local, State, regional, and national
4 capabilities (including communications capabilities)
5 necessary to respond to a natural disaster or man-
6 made disaster;

7 (7) develop and coordinate the implementation
8 of an all-hazards strategy for preparedness that
9 builds the common capabilities necessary to respond
10 to natural disasters and manmade disasters while
11 also building the unique capabilities necessary to re-
12 spond to specific types of incidents that pose the
13 greatest risk to our Nation; and

14 (8) identify, integrate, and implement the needs
15 of children, including children within underserved
16 communities, individuals with disabilities, and other
17 vulnerable populations with access and functional
18 needs, into activities to prepare for, respond to, re-
19 cover from, and mitigate against the risk of natural
20 disasters and other disasters, including catastrophic
21 incidents, including by appointing a technical expert,
22 who may consult with relevant outside organizations
23 and experts, as necessary, to coordinate such inte-
24 gration, as necessary.

25 (d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

1 (1) CATASTROPHIC INCIDENT.—The term “cat-
2 astrophic incident” means any natural disaster, act
3 of terrorism, or other man-made disaster that re-
4 sults in extraordinary levels of casualties or damage
5 or disruption severely affecting the population (in-
6 cluding mass evacuations), infrastructure, environ-
7 ment, economy, national morale, or government
8 functions in an area.

9 (2) CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE.—The term
10 “critical infrastructure” has the meaning given that
11 term in section 1016(e) of Public Law 107–56 (42
12 U.S.C. 5195c(e)).

13 (3) LOCAL GOVERNMENT.—The term local gov-
14 ernment means—

15 (A) a county, municipality, city, town,
16 township, local public authority, school district,
17 special district, intrastate district, council of
18 governments (regardless of whether the council
19 of governments is incorporated as a nonprofit
20 corporation under State law), regional or inter-
21 state government entity, or agency or instru-
22 mentality of a local government;

23 (B) an Indian tribe or authorized tribal or-
24 ganization, or in Alaska a Native village or
25 Alaska Regional Native Corporation; and

1 (C) a rural community, unincorporated
2 town or village, or other public entity.

3 (4) RESOURCES.—The term “resources” means
4 personnel and major items of equipment, supplies,
5 and facilities available or potentially available for re-
6 sponding to a natural disaster, act of terrorism, or
7 other manmade disaster.

8 (5) STATE.—The term “State” means any
9 State of the United States, the District of Columbia,
10 the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Virgin Is-
11 lands, Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth
12 of the Northern Mariana Islands, and any possession
13 of the United States.

14 (6) TRIBAL GOVERNMENT.—The term “Tribal
15 government” means the government of an Indian
16 tribe or authorized tribal organization, or in Alaska
17 a Native village or Alaska Regional Native Corpora-
18 tion.

19 (7) VULNERABLE POPULATIONS WITH ACCESS
20 AND FUNCTIONAL NEEDS.—The term “vulnerable
21 populations with access and functional needs”
22 means—

23 (A) the elderly, children, and individuals
24 with disabilities (including individuals with mo-
25 bility, communication, intellectual, and proc-

1 essing disabilities) for whom emergencies may
2 present unique access and functional needs,
3 such as maintaining independence, communica-
4 tion, transportation, supervision, and medical
5 care; and

6 (B) include individuals described in sub-
7 paragraph (A) who reside in institutionalized
8 settings.

9 **SEC. 12. ADMINISTRATOR; DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR;**
10 **OTHER OFFICIALS OF THE AGENCY.**

11 (a) ADMINISTRATOR.—

12 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Federal Emergency
13 Management Agency shall be headed by an Adminis-
14 trator, who shall be appointed by the President, by
15 and with the advice and consent of the Senate, and
16 who shall report directly to the President.

17 (2) PRINCIPAL ADVISOR ON EMERGENCY MAN-
18 AGEMENT.—The Administrator is the principal advi-
19 sor to the President for all matters relating to emer-
20 gency management in the United States.

21 (3) QUALIFICATIONS.—The Administrator shall
22 be appointed from among individuals who have—

23 (A) a demonstrated ability in, and knowl-
24 edge of, emergency management; and

1 (B) not less than 5 years of executive lead-
2 ership and management experience in the public
3 or private sector.

4 (4) EXECUTIVE SCHEDULE.—Title 5, United
5 States Code, is amended—

6 (A) in section 5312, by adding at the end
7 the following:

8 “Administrator of the Federal Emergency Man-
9 agement Agency.”; and

10 (B) in section 5313, by striking the item
11 relating to “Administrator of the Federal
12 Emergency Management Agency.”.

13 (b) DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR.—

14 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Agency shall have one
15 Deputy Administrator, who shall be appointed by
16 the President, by and with the advice and consent
17 of the Senate. The Deputy Administrator shall carry
18 out duties and powers prescribed by the Adminis-
19 trator and act for the Administrator when the Ad-
20 ministrator is absent or unable to serve or when the
21 position of the Administrator is vacant.

22 (2) QUALIFICATIONS.—The Deputy Adminis-
23 trator shall be appointed from among individuals
24 who have extensive experience in emergency pre-

1 paredness, response, recovery, and mitigating haz-
2 ards.

3 (3) EXECUTIVE SCHEDULE.—Section 5314 of
4 title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking
5 the item relating to “Deputy Administrators, Fed-
6 eral Emergency Management Agency.” and inserting
7 the following:

8 “Deputy Administrator, Federal Emergency Manage-
9 ment Agency.”.

10 (c) ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATORS.—

11 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Agency shall have one
12 or more Assistant Administrators, who shall be ap-
13 pointed by the Administrator, and whose duties shall
14 be determined by the Administrator.

15 (2) QUALIFICATIONS.—Each Assistant Admin-
16 istrator shall be appointed from among individuals
17 who have a demonstrated ability in and knowledge
18 of emergency management or other field relevant to
19 their position.

20 **SEC. 13. AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITIES.**

21 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the Federal
22 Emergency Management Agency shall provide Federal
23 leadership necessary to prepare for, respond to, recover
24 from, or mitigate against all disasters, including natural
25 or manmade, including—

1 (1) helping to ensure the effectiveness of emer-
2 gency response providers to major disasters (as that
3 term is defined in section 102 of the Robert T. Staf-
4 ford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act
5 (42 U.S.C. 5122)) and other emergencies;

6 (2) with respect to the Nuclear Incident Re-
7 sponse Team—

8 (A) establishing standards and certifying
9 when such standards have been met; and

10 (B) conducting joint and other exercises
11 and training and evaluating performance;

12 (3) providing the Federal Government's re-
13 sponse to all disasters, including—

14 (A) managing such response;

15 (B) directing the Domestic Emergency
16 Support Team and the Nuclear Incident Re-
17 sponse Team;

18 (C) overseeing the Metropolitan Medical
19 Response System; and

20 (D) coordinating other Federal response
21 resources, including requiring deployment of the
22 Strategic National Stockpile, in the event of a
23 disaster;

24 (4) aiding the recovery from a disaster;

1 (5) building a comprehensive national incident
2 management system with Federal, State, and local
3 government personnel, agencies, and authorities, to
4 respond to such attacks and disasters;

5 (6) consolidating existing Federal Government
6 emergency response plans into a single, coordinated
7 national response plan;

8 (7) helping ensure the acquisition of operable
9 and interoperable communications capabilities by
10 Federal, State, local, and Tribal governments and
11 emergency response providers;

12 (8) assisting the President in carrying out the
13 functions under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Re-
14 lief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121
15 et seq.) and carrying out all functions and authori-
16 ties given to the Administrator under such Act;

17 (9) carrying out the mission of the Agency to
18 reduce the loss of life and property and prepare the
19 Nation for all hazards by leading and supporting the
20 Nation in a comprehensive emergency management
21 system of—

22 (A) mitigation, by taking sustained actions
23 to reduce or eliminate long-term risks to people
24 and property from hazards and their effects;

1 (B) preparedness, by planning, training,
2 and building the emergency management pro-
3 fession to prepare effectively for, mitigate
4 against, respond to, and recover from any haz-
5 ard;

6 (C) response, by conducting emergency op-
7 erations to save lives and property through po-
8 sitioning emergency equipment, personnel, and
9 supplies, through evacuating potential victims,
10 through providing food, water, shelter, and
11 medical care to those in need, and through re-
12 storing critical public services; and

13 (D) recovery, by rebuilding communities so
14 individuals, businesses, and governments can
15 function on their own, return to normal life,
16 and protect against future hazards;

17 (10) increasing efficiencies, by coordinating ef-
18 forts relating to preparedness, response, recovery,
19 and mitigation;

20 (11) helping to ensure the effectiveness of emer-
21 gency response providers in responding to all haz-
22 ards, including natural or man-made;

23 (12) supervising grant programs administered
24 by the Agency;

1 (13) administering and ensuring the implemen-
2 tation of the National Response Plan, including co-
3 ordinating and ensuring the readiness of each emer-
4 gency support function under the National Response
5 Plan;

6 (14) coordinating with the National Advisory
7 Council established under section 508 of the Home-
8 land Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 318);

9 (15) preparing and implementing the plans and
10 programs of the Federal Government for—

11 (A) continuity of operations;

12 (B) continuity of government; and

13 (C) continuity of plans;

14 (16) minimizing, to the extent practicable, over-
15 lapping planning and reporting requirements appli-
16 cable to State, local, and Tribal governments and
17 the private sector;

18 (17) maintaining and operating within the
19 Agency the National Response Coordination Center
20 or its successor;

21 (18) developing a national emergency manage-
22 ment system that is capable of preparing for, re-
23 sponding to, recovering from, and mitigating against
24 catastrophic incidents;

1 (19) assisting the President in carrying out the
2 functions under the national preparedness goal and
3 the national preparedness system and carrying out
4 all functions and authorities of the Administrator
5 under the national preparedness System;

6 (20) carrying out all authorities of the Federal
7 Emergency Management Agency; and

8 (21) otherwise carrying out the mission of the
9 Agency as described in section 11(b).

10 (b) ALL-HAZARDS APPROACH.—In carrying out the
11 responsibilities under this section, the Administrator shall
12 coordinate the implementation of an all-hazards strategy
13 that builds those common capabilities necessary to prepare
14 for, respond to, recover from, or mitigate against all-haz-
15 ards whether natural or manmade, while also building the
16 unique capabilities necessary to prepare for, respond to,
17 recover from, or mitigate against the risks of specific types
18 of incidents that pose the greatest risk to the Nation.

19 (c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

20 (1) INTEROPERABLE.—The term “interoper-
21 able” has the meaning given the term “interoperable
22 communications” under section 7303(g)(1) of the
23 Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act
24 of 2004 (6 U.S.C. 194(g)(1)).

1 (2) LOCAL GOVERNMENT.—The term local gov-
2 ernment means—

3 (A) a county, municipality, city, town,
4 township, local public authority, school district,
5 special district, intrastate district, council of
6 governments (regardless of whether the council
7 of governments is incorporated as a nonprofit
8 corporation under State law), regional or inter-
9 state government entity, or agency or instru-
10 mentality of a local government;

11 (B) an Indian tribe or authorized tribal or-
12 ganization, or in Alaska a Native village or
13 Alaska Regional Native Corporation; and

14 (C) a rural community, unincorporated
15 town or village, or other public entity.

16 (3) RESOURCES.—The term “resources” means
17 personnel and major items of equipment, supplies,
18 and facilities available or potentially available for re-
19 sponding to a natural disaster, act of terrorism, or
20 other manmade disaster.

21 (4) STATE.—The term “State” means any
22 State of the United States, the District of Columbia,
23 the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Virgin Is-
24 lands, Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth

1 of the Northern Mariana Islands, and any possession
2 of the United States.

3 (5) TRIBAL GOVERNMENT.—The term “Tribal
4 government” means the government of an Indian
5 tribe or authorized tribal organization, or in Alaska
6 a Native village or Alaska Regional Native Corpora-
7 tion.

8 **SEC. 14. OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL.**

9 The Federal Emergency Management Agency shall
10 have an Office of the Inspector General, headed by an In-
11 spector General who shall be appointed by the President,
12 by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, in ac-
13 cordance with chapter 4 of title 5, United States Code.

14 **SEC. 15. TRANSFER OF FUNCTIONS.**

15 (a) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided by subsection
16 (c), there shall be transferred to the Administrator of the
17 Federal Emergency Management Agency the following:

18 (1) All functions of the Federal Emergency
19 Management Agency, as constituted on the day be-
20 fore the date of enactment of this Act, including
21 continuity of operations and continuity of Govern-
22 ment plans and programs.

23 (2) The functions relating to the Agency under
24 the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emer-

1 agency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.) and
2 other laws, including—

3 (A) the National Flood Insurance Act of
4 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4001 et seq.);

5 (B) the Earthquake Hazards Reduction
6 Act of 1977 (42 U.S.C. 7701 et seq.);

7 (C) the National Dam Safety Program Act
8 (33 U.S.C. 467 et seq.);

9 (D) the Federal Fire Prevention and Con-
10 trol Act of 1974 (15 U.S.C. 2201 et seq.);

11 (E) Reorganization Plan No. 3 of 1978 (5
12 U.S.C. App.);

13 (F) section 612 of the Security and Ac-
14 countability For Every Port Act of 2006 (6
15 U.S.C. 314a);

16 (G) title III of the McKinney-Vento Home-
17 less Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11331 et seq.);

18 (H) the Department of Homeland Security
19 Appropriations Act, 2007 (Public Law 109-
20 295);

21 (I) the Disaster Relief Appropriations Act,
22 2013 (Public Law 113-2);

23 (J) the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018
24 (Public Law 115-254);

1 (K) the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018
2 (Public Law 115–123);

3 (L) the Implementing Recommendations of
4 the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007 (Public Law
5 110–53); and

6 (M) any other relevant laws relating to the
7 Agency.

8 (b) INSPECTOR GENERAL.—There shall be trans-
9 ferred to the Inspector General of the Federal Emergency
10 Management Agency all of the functions relating to the
11 Inspector General that were transferred from the Federal
12 Emergency Management Agency to the Department of
13 Homeland Security on or after January 1, 2003.

14 (c) EXCEPTIONS.—

15 (1) PROGRAMS UNAFFECTED.—The following
16 programs shall not be affected by this Act and shall
17 remain within the Department of Homeland Secu-
18 rity:

19 (A) The grant programs authorized by sec-
20 tions 1406, 1513, and 1532 of the Imple-
21 menting Recommendations of the 9/11 Commis-
22 sion Act (6 U.S.C. 1135, 1163, and 1182).

23 (B) The grant program authorized by sec-
24 tion 70107 of title 46, United States Code.

1 (C) Programs authorized in subtitle A of
2 title XX of the Homeland Security Act of 2002
3 (6 U.S.C. 603 et seq.).

4 (2) MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING.—With
5 respect to the programs under paragraph (1), the
6 Secretary of Homeland Security and the Adminis-
7 trator shall enter into a memorandum of under-
8 standing providing that—

9 (A) during the transition period under sub-
10 section (e), the Administrator shall continue to
11 administer such programs; and

12 (B) the Administrator may assess a fee on
13 the Secretary for the administration of such
14 programs and any additional programs, as con-
15 sidered necessary by the Administrator or the
16 Secretary.

17 (d) UNITED STATES FIRE ADMINISTRATOR; FED-
18 ERAL INSURANCE ADMINISTRATOR.—Nothing in this Act
19 shall be construed to affect the appointment of the United
20 States Fire Administrator under section 5(b) of the Fire
21 Prevention and Control Act of 1974 (15 U.S.C. 2204(b))
22 or the Federal Insurance Administrator under section
23 1105(a) of the Housing and Urban Development Act of
24 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4129).

1 (e) TRANSITION PERIOD.—The transfers under this
2 section shall be carried out not later than 1 year after
3 the date of enactment of this Act. During the transition
4 period, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall provide
5 to the Administrator such assistance, including the use of
6 personnel and assets, as the Administrator may request
7 in preparing for the transfer.

8 (f) TRANSITION.—The Administrator may use—

9 (1) the services of such officers, employees, and
10 other personnel of the Department of Homeland Se-
11 curity with respect to functions transferred by this
12 section; and

13 (2) funds appropriated to such functions for
14 such period of time as may reasonably be needed to
15 facilitate the orderly implementation of this section.

16 (g) LIAISON OFFICE TO ENSURE COORDINATION
17 WITH DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY.—The Ad-
18 ministrator shall establish a liaison office within the Agen-
19 cy to ensure adequate coordination with the Department
20 of Homeland Security.

21 **SEC. 16. PERSONNEL AND OTHER TRANSFERS.**

22 (a) PERSONNEL PROVISIONS.—

23 (1) APPOINTMENTS.—The Administrator of the
24 Federal Emergency Management Agency may ap-
25 point and fix the compensation of such officers and

1 employees, including investigators, attorneys, and
2 administrative law judges, as may be necessary to
3 carry out the respective functions transferred under
4 section 15. Except as otherwise provided by law,
5 such officers and employees shall be appointed in ac-
6 cordance with the civil service laws and their com-
7 pensation fixed in accordance with title 5, United
8 States Code.

9 (2) EXPERTS AND CONSULTANTS.—The Admin-
10 istrator may obtain the services of experts and con-
11 sultants in accordance with section 3109 of title 5,
12 United States Code, and compensate such experts
13 and consultants for each day (including travel time)
14 during which they are engaged in the actual per-
15 formance of such services at rates not in excess of
16 the rate of pay for level IV of the Executive Sched-
17 ule under section 5315 of such title. The Adminis-
18 trator may pay experts and consultants who are
19 serving away from their homes or regular place of
20 business, travel expenses and per diem in lieu of
21 subsistence at rates authorized by sections 5702 and
22 5703 of such title for persons in Government service
23 employed intermittently.

24 (b) DELEGATION AND ASSIGNMENT.—Except where
25 otherwise expressly prohibited by law or otherwise pro-

1 vided by this division, the Administrator may delegate any
2 of the functions transferred to the Administrator by sec-
3 tion 15 and any function transferred or granted to the
4 Administrator after the date of the transfers by section
5 15 to such officers and employees of the Agency as the
6 Administrator may designate and may authorize succes-
7 sive redelegations of such functions as may be necessary
8 or appropriate. No delegation of functions by the Adminis-
9 trator under this subsection or under any other provision
10 of this division shall relieve the Administrator of responsi-
11 bility for the administration of such functions.

12 (c) REORGANIZATION.—The Administrator may allo-
13 cate or reallocate any function transferred under section
14 15 among the officers of the Agency, and may establish,
15 consolidate, alter, or discontinue such organizational enti-
16 ties in the Agency as may be necessary or appropriate if
17 the Administrator, on or before the 30th day preceding
18 the date of the allocation or reallocation, provides to Con-
19 gress written notice of the allocation or reallocation.

20 (d) RULES.—The Administrator may prescribe, in ac-
21 cordance with the provisions of chapters 5 and 6 of title
22 5, United States Code, such rules and regulations as the
23 Administrator determines necessary or appropriate to ad-
24 minister and manage the functions of the Agency.

1 (e) TRANSFER AND ALLOCATIONS OF APPROPRIA-
2 TIONS AND PERSONNEL.—Except as otherwise provided
3 in this division, the personnel employed in connection with,
4 and the assets, liabilities, contracts, property, records, and
5 unexpended balances of appropriations, authorizations, al-
6 locations, and other funds employed, used, held, arising
7 from, available to, or to be made available in connection
8 with the functions transferred by section 15, subject to
9 section 1531 of title 31, United States Code, shall be
10 transferred to the Agency. Unexpended funds transferred
11 pursuant to this subsection shall be used only for the pur-
12 poses for which the funds were originally authorized and
13 appropriated.

14 (f) INCIDENTAL TRANSFERS.—The Director of the
15 Office of Management and Budget, in consultation with
16 the Administrator, may make such determinations as may
17 be necessary with regard to the functions transferred by
18 section 15, and may make such additional incidental dis-
19 positions of personnel, assets, liabilities, grants, contracts,
20 property, records, and unexpended balances of appropria-
21 tions, authorizations, allocations, and other funds held,
22 used, arising from, available to, or to be made available
23 in connection with such functions, as may be necessary
24 to carry out the provisions of this division. The Director
25 of the Office of Management and Budget shall provide for

1 the termination of the affairs of all entities terminated by
2 this division and for such further measures and disposi-
3 tions as may be necessary to effectuate the purposes of
4 this division.

5 (g) EFFECT ON PERSONNEL.—

6 (1) IN GENERAL.—Except as otherwise pro-
7 vided by this division, the transfer pursuant to this
8 division of full-time personnel (except special Gov-
9 ernment employees) and part-time personnel holding
10 permanent positions shall not cause any such em-
11 ployee to be separated or reduced in grade or com-
12 pensation for one year after the date of transfer of
13 such employee under this division.

14 (2) EXECUTIVE SCHEDULE POSITIONS.—Except
15 as otherwise provided in this division, any person
16 who, on the day preceding the date of the transfers
17 of functions under section 15, held a position com-
18 pensated in accordance with the Executive Schedule
19 prescribed in chapter 53 of title 5, United States
20 Code, and who, without a break in service, is ap-
21 pointed in the Agency to a position having duties
22 comparable to the duties performed immediately pre-
23 ceding such appointment shall continue to be com-
24 pensated in such new position at not less than the
25 rate provided for such previous position, for the du-

1 ration of the service of such person in such new po-
2 sition.

3 **SEC. 17. SAVING PROVISIONS.**

4 (a) CONTINUING EFFECT OF LEGAL DOCUMENTS.—

5 All orders, determinations, rules, regulations, permits,
6 agreements, grants, contracts, certificates, licenses, reg-
7 istrations, privileges, and other administrative actions—

8 (1) which have been issued, made, granted, or
9 allowed to become effective by the President, any
10 Federal agency or official thereof, or by a court of
11 competent jurisdiction, in the performance of func-
12 tions that are transferred under section 15; and

13 (2) which are in effect on the date of the trans-
14 fers of functions under section 15, or were final be-
15 fore such date and are to become effective on or
16 after such date, shall continue in effect according to
17 their terms until modified, terminated, superseded,
18 set aside, or revoked in accordance with law by the
19 President, the Administrator, or other authorized of-
20 ficial, a court of competent jurisdiction, or by oper-
21 ation of law.

22 (b) PROCEEDINGS NOT AFFECTED.—The provisions
23 of this division shall not affect any proceedings, including
24 notices of proposed rulemaking, or any application for any
25 license, permit, certificate, or financial assistance pending

1 before the Agency on the date of the transfers of functions
2 under section 15, with respect to functions transferred by
3 section 15, but such proceedings and applications shall
4 continue. Orders shall be issued in such proceedings, ap-
5 peals shall be taken therefrom, and payments shall be
6 made pursuant to such orders, as if this division had not
7 been enacted, and orders issued in any such proceedings
8 shall continue in effect until modified, terminated, super-
9 seded, or revoked by a duly authorized official, by a court
10 of competent jurisdiction, or by operation of law. Nothing
11 in this subsection shall be deemed to prohibit the dis-
12 continuance or modification of any such proceeding under
13 the same terms and conditions and to the same extent that
14 such proceeding could have been discontinued or modified
15 if this division had not been enacted.

16 (c) SUITS NOT AFFECTED.—The provisions of this
17 division shall not affect suits commenced before the date
18 of the transfers of functions under section 15, and in all
19 such suits, proceedings shall be had, appeals taken, and
20 judgments rendered in the same manner and with the
21 same effect as if this division had not been enacted.

22 (d) NONABATEMENT OF ACTIONS.—No suit, action,
23 or other proceeding commenced by or against the Agency,
24 or by or against any individual in the official capacity of

1 such individual as an officer of the Agency, shall abate
2 by reason of the enactment of this division.

3 (e) ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIONS RELATING TO PRO-
4 MULGATION OF REGULATIONS.—Any administrative ac-
5 tion relating to the preparation or promulgation of a regu-
6 lation by the Agency relating to a function transferred
7 under section 15 may be continued by the Agency with
8 the same effect as if this division had not been enacted.

9 **SEC. 18. REFERENCES.**

10 (a) REFERENCES TO FEMA.—Any reference to the
11 Federal Emergency Management Agency in any law, Ex-
12 ecutive order, rule, regulation, certificate, directive, in-
13 struction, delegation of authority, or other official paper
14 shall be considered to refer and apply to the Agency estab-
15 lished by section 11.

16 (b) REFERENCES TO ADMINISTRATOR OF FEMA.—
17 Any reference to the Administrator of the Federal Emer-
18 gency Management Agency in any law, Executive order,
19 rule, regulation, certificate, directive, instruction, delega-
20 tion of authority, or other official paper shall be consid-
21 ered to refer and apply to the Administrator established
22 by section 12(a)(1).

23 (c) REFERENCES TO INSPECTOR GENERAL.—Any
24 reference to the Inspector General of the Federal Emer-
25 gency Management Agency or to the functions relating to

1 such office that were transferred from the Federal Emer-
2 gency Management Agency to the Department of Home-
3 land Security on or after January 1, 2003, in any law,
4 Executive order, rule, regulation, certificate, directive, in-
5 struction, delegation of authority, or other official paper
6 shall be considered to refer and apply to the Inspector
7 General established by section 14 or to the functions re-
8 lated to the office of such Inspector General.

9 **SEC. 19. FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY**
10 **WORKING CAPITAL FUND.**

11 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is hereby established in
12 the Treasury a revolving fund for the Federal Emergency
13 Management Agency for operation of any Federal Emer-
14 gency Management Agency headquarters, multi-discipline
15 facility to be known as the “Federal Emergency Manage-
16 ment Agency Working Capital Fund”.

17 (b) FEES FOR SERVICES.—

18 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the
19 Federal Emergency Management Agency may
20 charge a fee for services and equipment provided at
21 any Federal Emergency Management Agency head-
22 quarters, multi-discipline facility to the Department
23 of Homeland Security, other Federal agencies, and
24 other sources authorized by law, and shall deposit

1 such fees charged into the account of the revolving
2 fund established under this section.

3 (2) FEE AMOUNT.—The Administrator of the
4 Federal Emergency Management Agency shall set
5 the fee authorized under this subsection at rates
6 that will return in full all expenses of operation for
7 the facility or facilities, including accrued leave, de-
8 preciation of fund plant and equipment, amortiza-
9 tion of automated data processing software and sys-
10 tems (either acquired or donated), and an amount
11 necessary to maintain reasonable operating reserve
12 as determined by the Administrator.

13 (3) ADVANCE OF FUNDS.—Participants re-
14 questing services or equipment at the facility or fa-
15 cilities shall pay for such services and equipment by
16 advance of funds—

17 (A) if the Administrator determines that
18 amounts in the revolving fund are otherwise in-
19 sufficient to cover the costs of providing such
20 equipment and services; or

21 (B) upon agreement between the partici-
22 pants and the Administrator.

23 (c) CONTENTS OF FUND.—The revolving fund estab-
24 lished under this section shall consist of the following
25 amounts:

1 (1) Amounts deposited by the Administrator
2 under subsection (b).

3 (2) Any other amounts received by the Adminis-
4 trator which are attributable to the programs cov-
5 ered by the fund.

6 (3) Such other amounts as may be appropriated
7 under law.

8 (d) USE OF AMOUNTS.—Amounts deposited into the
9 revolving fund established under this section shall be avail-
10 able for the necessary expenses of operating the facility
11 or facilities, including the provision of equipment and serv-
12 ices on a fee basis as authorized under subsection (b).

13 (e) DEPOSIT OF FUNDS DURING TRANSITION.—Not-
14 withstanding section 506 of the Department of Homeland
15 Security Appropriations Act, 2004 (Public Law 108–90;
16 31 U.S.C. 501 note) (as extended by section 504 of the
17 Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act,
18 2023 (division F of Public Law 117–328), and any subse-
19 quent law), there shall be transferred to the revolving fund
20 established under this section the assets, liabilities, con-
21 tracts, inventory, equipment, property, records, and unex-
22 pected balance of appropriations and other funds held,
23 used, arising from, available to, or to be made available
24 to the Department of Homeland Security Working Capital
25 Fund for the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

1 Unexpended funds transferred pursuant to this paragraph
2 shall be merged with the revolving fund and shall be avail-
3 able as authorized by this section.

4 **SEC. 20. IMPROVING DISASTER ASSISTANCE FOR VET-**
5 **ERANS.**

6 (a) IN GENERAL.—Title III of the Robert T. Stafford
7 Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (15 U.S.C.
8 5141 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the fol-
9 lowing:

10 **“SEC. 328. DESIGNATION OF VETERANS ADVOCATE.**

11 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The President shall designate in
12 the Federal Emergency Management Agency a Veterans
13 Advocate.

14 “(b) RESPONSIBILITIES.—The Veterans Advocate
15 shall be an advocate for the fair treatment of veterans in
16 the provision of assistance under this Act.

17 “(c) DUTIES.—The Veterans Advocate shall—

18 “(1) participate in the disaster declaration
19 process under section 401 and the emergency dec-
20 laration process under section 501 to ensure that the
21 needs of veterans are being addressed;

22 “(2) serve as the primary point of contact be-
23 tween veterans service organizations and the Federal
24 Emergency Management Agency;

1 “(3) identify opportunities for expanded veteran
2 recruitment for Federal Emergency Management
3 Agency employment, including Federal Emergency
4 Management Agency reservist positions; and

5 “(4) conduct such other activities as the Ad-
6 ministrator of the Federal Emergency Management
7 Agency considers appropriate.”.

8 (b) STATUTORY CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in the
9 amendment made by this section shall be construed to au-
10 thorize major disaster or emergency assistance under the
11 Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assist-
12 ance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.) that is not authorized
13 as of the date of enactment of this Act.

14 **TITLE II—OFFICES AND FUNC-**
15 **TIONS OF FEDERAL EMER-**
16 **GENCY MANAGEMENT AGEN-**
17 **CY**

18 **SEC. 21. NATIONAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT.**

19 (a) OTHER OFFICERS.—Section 103(a)(1) of the
20 Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 113(a)(1)) is
21 amended—

22 (1) by striking subparagraph (D); and

23 (2) by redesignating subparagraphs (E)
24 through (K) as subparagraphs (D) through (J), re-
25 spectively.

1 (b) REPEALS.—Sections 503, 504, and 506 of the
2 Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 316), and the
3 items relating to such sections in section 1(b) of such Act,
4 are repealed.

5 (c) REGIONAL OFFICES.—Section 507 of the Home-
6 land Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 317) is amended—

7 (1) in subsection (b)(2)(A) by striking “and
8 homeland security”; and

9 (2) in subsection (f)(3) by striking “other than
10 the Department”.

11 (d) NATIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL.—Section 508 of
12 the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 318) is
13 amended—

14 (1) in subsection (a)—

15 (A) by striking “Not later than 60 days
16 after the date of enactment of the Post-Katrina
17 Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006,
18 the Secretary shall establish” and inserting
19 “There is established”; and

20 (B) by striking “protection,”;

21 (2) in subsection (b)(2) by striking “adminis-
22 tered by the Department”; and

23 (3) in subsection (c)(1)(D) by striking “protec-
24 tion,”;

1 (e) NATIONAL INTEGRATION CENTER.—Section
2 509(c)(1) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C.
3 319(c)(1)) is amended—

4 (1) in subparagraph (A) by striking “Secretary,
5 acting through the Administrator,” and inserting
6 “Administrator”; and

7 (2) in subparagraph (B)(i) by striking “, the
8 Homeland Security Council, and the Secretary under
9 section 503(c)(4)”.

10 (f) EVACUATION PLANS AND EXERCISES.—Section
11 512 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C.
12 321a) is amended—

13 (1) in subsection (a) by inserting “, in coordi-
14 nation with the Administrator,” after “may”; and

15 (2) in subsection (c)(2) by striking “Adminis-
16 trator” and inserting “Secretary”.

17 (g) DEPARTMENT AND AGENCY OFFICIALS.—

18 (1) IN GENERAL.—Section 514 of the Home-
19 land Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 321c) is
20 amended by striking “(a) DEPUTY” and all that fol-
21 lows through “The Administrator of the” and insert-
22 ing “The Administrator of the”.

23 (2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The item relating
24 to section 514 in the table of contents in section

1 1(b) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 is
2 amended to read as follows:

“514. United States Fire Administration.”.

3 (h) NATIONAL OPERATIONS CENTER.—Section 515
4 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 321d)
5 is amended—

6 (1) in subsection (b) by striking “Department”
7 and inserting “Agency”; and

8 (2) in subsection (c) by striking “Secretary”
9 each place it appears and inserting “Administrator”.

10 (i) NUCLEAR INCIDENT RESPONSE.—Section 517 of
11 the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 321f)—

12 (1) by striking “Department” each place it ap-
13 pears and inserting “Agency”; and

14 (2) in subsection (a)—

15 (A) by striking “direction of the Sec-
16 retary” and inserting “direction of the Adminis-
17 trator”; and

18 (B) by striking “control of the Secretary”
19 and inserting “control of the Administrator”.

20 (j) CONDUCT OF CERTAIN PUBLIC HEALTH-RE-
21 LATED ACTIVITIES.—Section 518 of the Homeland Secu-
22 rity Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 321g) is amended—

23 (1) in subsection (a) by striking “collaboration
24 with the Secretary” and inserting “collaboration
25 with the Administrator”; and

1 (2) in subsection (b) by striking “with the Sec-
2 retary” and inserting “with the Administrator”.

3 (k) USE OF NATIONAL PRIVATE SECTOR NETWORKS
4 IN EMERGENCY RESPONSE.—Section 519 of the Home-
5 land Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 321h) is amended
6 by striking “Secretary” and inserting “Administrator”.

7 (l) PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE ACT.—

8 (1) PROCUREMENT OF SECURITY COUNTER-
9 MEASURES FOR STRATEGIC NATIONAL STOCKPILE.—
10 Section 319F–2 of the Public Health Service Act
11 (42 U.S.C. 247d–6b) is amended—

12 (A) in subsection (a)(1) by striking “and
13 in coordination with the Secretary of Homeland
14 Security (referred to in this section as the
15 ‘Homeland Security Secretary’)” and inserting
16 “and in coordination with the Administrator of
17 the Federal Emergency Management Agency
18 (referred to in this section as the ‘Adminis-
19 trator’)”; and

20 (B) in subsection (c)—

21 (i) by striking “Homeland Security
22 Secretary” each place it appears and in-
23 serting “Administrator”; and

24 (ii) in paragraph (2)(C)—

1 (I) by striking “Secretary of
2 Homeland Security” and inserting
3 “Administrator”; and

4 (II) by inserting “, the Com-
5 mittee on Transportation and Infra-
6 structure,” after “Energy and Com-
7 merce”.

8 (2) IMPROVING STATE AND LOCAL PUBLIC
9 HEALTH SECURITY.—Section 319C–1(f) of the Pub-
10 lic Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 247d–3a(f)) is
11 amended—

12 (A) in the heading by striking “HOME-
13 LAND SECURITY” and inserting “FEDERAL
14 EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY”; and

15 (B) by striking “Secretary of Homeland
16 Security” and inserting “Administrator of the
17 Federal Emergency Management Agency”.

18 (3) PARTNERSHIPS FOR STATE AND REGIONAL
19 HOSPITAL PREPAREDNESS TO IMPROVE SURGE CA-
20 PACITY.—Section 319C–2(d)(2)(B) of the Public
21 Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 247d–3b(d)(2)(B)) is
22 amended by inserting “and the Administrator of the
23 Federal Emergency Management Agency” after
24 “Homeland Security”.

1 (4) FACILITIES AND CAPACITIES OF THE CEN-
2 TERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION.—
3 Section 319D(c)(2)(B) of the Public Health Service
4 Act (42 U.S.C. 247d–4(c)(2)(B)) is amended by in-
5 serting “the Administrator of the Federal Emer-
6 gency Management Agency,” after “Homeland Secu-
7 rity,”.

8 (5) EMERGENCY SYSTEM FOR ADVANCE REG-
9 ISTRATION OF VOLUNTEER HEALTH PROFES-
10 SIONAL.—Section 319I(f) of the Public Health Serv-
11 ice Act (42 U.S.C. 247d–7b(f)) is amended—

12 (A) by striking “Secretary of Homeland
13 Security” and inserting “Administrator of the
14 Federal Emergency Management Agency”; and

15 (B) by striking “Department of Homeland
16 Security” and inserting “Federal Emergency
17 Management Agency”.

18 (m) GUIDANCE AND RECOMMENDATIONS.—Section
19 523 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C.
20 3211) is amended—

21 (1) in subsection (a) by striking “the Adminis-
22 trator and the Director of the Cybersecurity and In-
23 frastructure Security Agency, in consultation with
24 the private sector” and inserting “the Adminis-
25 trator, in consultation with the Director of the Cy-

1 bersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency and
2 the private sector”; and

3 (2) in subsection (b)(2) by striking “Secretary”
4 and inserting “Administrator”.

5 (n) VOLUNTARY PRIVATE SECTOR PREPAREDNESS
6 ACCREDITATION AND CERTIFICATION PROGRAM.—Sec-
7 tion 524 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C.
8 321m) is amended—

9 (1) in subsection (a) by striking paragraphs (1)
10 through (3) and inserting the following: “The Ad-
11 ministrator shall establish and implement the vol-
12 untary private sector preparedness accreditation and
13 certification program in accordance with this sec-
14 tion.”; and

15 (2) in subsection (b) by striking “designated of-
16 ficer” each place it appears and inserting “Adminis-
17 trator”.

18 (o) ACCEPTANCE OF GIFTS.—Section 525 of the
19 Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 321n) is
20 amended—

21 (1) by striking “Secretary” each place it ap-
22 pears and inserting “Administrator”;

23 (2) in paragraphs (1) and (2) of subsection (b)
24 by striking “Department” and inserting “Agency”;
25 and

1 (3) in subsection (c)(1) by inserting “the Com-
2 mittee on Transportation and Infrastructure and”
3 after “submit to”.

4 (p) NATIONAL PLANNING AND EDUCATION.—Section
5 527 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C.
6 321p) is amended by striking “Secretary” and inserting
7 “Administrator, in consultation with the Secretary,”.

8 (q) COORDINATION OF DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND
9 SECURITY EFFORTS RELATED TO FOOD, AGRICULTURE,
10 AND VETERINARY DEFENSE AGAINST TERRORISM.—Sec-
11 tion 528(c) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6
12 U.S.C. 321q(e)) is amended—

13 (1) by striking “Agriculture or” and inserting
14 “Agriculture,”; and

15 (2) by inserting “,or the Administrator” before
16 the period at the end.

17 (r) CONTINUITY OF THE ECONOMY PLAN.—Section
18 9603 of division A of the William M. (Mac) Thornberry
19 National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021
20 (6 U.S.C. 622) is amended—

21 (1) in subsection (b)(1)—

22 (A) by redesignating subparagraphs (H)
23 and (I) as subparagraphs (I) and (J); and

24 (B) by inserting after subparagraph (G)
25 the following:

1 “(H) the Administrator of the Federal
2 Emergency Management Agency;” and

3 (2) in subsection (c)(1)—

4 (A) by redesignating subparagraphs (S)
5 and (T) as subparagraphs (T) and (U); and

6 (B) by inserting after subparagraph (R)
7 the following:

8 “(S) the Committee on Transportation and
9 Infrastructure of the House of Representa-
10 tives;”.

11 (s) JOINT TASK FORCES.—Section 708(b)(2)(B) of
12 the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C.
13 348(b)(2)(B)) is amended—

14 (1) in clause (i)—

15 (A) by striking “including section
16 504(a)(3)(A),”; and

17 (B) in subclause (II) by striking “para-
18 graphs (3) and (4)(A) of section 503(c) and
19 section 509(c) of this Act,” and inserting “the
20 FEMA Act of 2025”; and

21 (2) in clause (ii) by striking “, including” and
22 all that follows through “section 506”.

1 **TITLE III—RELATED MATTERS**

2 **SEC. 31. CHANGES TO ADMINISTRATIVE DOCUMENTS.**

3 Not later than 120 days after the date of enactment
4 of this Act, the President shall amend Homeland Security
5 Presidential Directive–5, Homeland Security Presidential
6 Directive–8, Presidential Policy Directive–8, and any
7 other similar administrative document to reflect the
8 changes made by this division and the amendments made
9 by this division.

10 **SEC. 32. RECOMMENDED LEGISLATION.**

11 (a) IN GENERAL.—After consultation with Congress,
12 the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management
13 Agency shall prepare recommended legislation containing
14 additional technical and conforming amendments to reflect
15 the changes made by this division.

16 (b) SUBMISSION TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 90
17 days after the last day of the transition period referred
18 to in section 15(e), the Administrator shall submit to Con-
19 gress a report containing the recommended legislation.

20 **DIVISION B—FEMA REFORMS**

21 **TITLE I—PUBLIC ASSISTANCE**

22 **REFORMS**

23 **SEC. 101. REBUILDING PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE.**

24 (a) IN GENERAL.—Title IV of the Robert T. Stafford
25 Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C.

1 5170 et seq.) is amended by inserting after section 408
2 the following:

3 **“SEC. 409. EXPEDITED REPAIR, RESTORATION, AND RE-**
4 **PLACEMENT OF DAMAGED FACILITIES.**

5 “(a) GRANTS FOR REPAIR, RESTORATION, RECON-
6 STRUCTION, OR REPLACEMENT OF A PUBLIC FACILITY.—

7 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The President may make
8 grants—

9 “(A) to a State or local government for the
10 repair, restoration, reconstruction, or replace-
11 ment of a public facility damaged or destroyed
12 by a major disaster; and

13 “(B) subject to paragraph (2), to a person
14 that owns or operates a private nonprofit facil-
15 ity damaged or destroyed by a major disaster
16 for the repair, restoration, reconstruction, or re-
17 placement of the facility.

18 “(2) CONDITIONS FOR ASSISTANCE TO PRIVATE
19 NONPROFIT FACILITIES.—

20 “(A) IN GENERAL.—The President may
21 make grants to a private nonprofit facility
22 under paragraph (1)(B) only if—

23 “(i) the facility provides critical serv-
24 ices (as defined by the President) in the
25 event of a major disaster; or

1 “(ii) the owner or operator of the fa-
2 cility—

3 “(I) has applied for a disaster
4 loan under section 7(b) of the Small
5 Business Act (15 U.S.C. 636(b)); and

6 “(II)(aa) has been determined to
7 be ineligible for such a loan; or

8 “(bb) has obtained such a loan in
9 the maximum amount for which the
10 Small Business Administration deter-
11 mines the facility is eligible.

12 “(B) RELIGIOUS FACILITIES.—A church,
13 synagogue, mosque, temple, or other house of
14 worship, educational facility, or any other pri-
15 vate nonprofit facility shall be eligible for
16 grants under paragraph (1)(B), without regard
17 to the religious character of the facility or the
18 primary religious use of the facility. No house
19 of worship, educational facility, or any other
20 private nonprofit facility may be excluded from
21 receiving grants under paragraph (1)(B) be-
22 cause leadership or membership in the organi-
23 zation operating the house of worship is limited
24 to persons who share a religious faith or prac-
25 tice.

1 “(C) DEFINITION OF CRITICAL SERV-
2 ICES.—In this paragraph, the term ‘critical
3 services’ includes power, water (including water
4 provided by an irrigation organization or facil-
5 ity), sewer, wastewater treatment, communica-
6 tions (including broadcast and telecommuni-
7 cations), education, food and emergency supply
8 distribution, and emergency medical care.

9 “(3) NOTIFICATION TO CONGRESS.—The Presi-
10 dent shall notify the following committees not later
11 than 30 days after making any contribution under
12 this section in an amount greater than \$20,000,000:

13 “(A) The Committee on Homeland Secu-
14 rity and Governmental Affairs of the Senate.

15 “(B) The Committee on Transportation
16 and Infrastructure of the House of Representa-
17 tives.

18 “(C) The Committee on Appropriations of
19 the Senate.

20 “(D) The Committee on Appropriations of
21 the House of Representatives.

22 “(b) GRANT REQUIREMENTS.—

23 “(1) USE OF GRANT FUNDS.—Grant funds
24 made to a State, local government, or a person that

1 owns or operates a private nonprofit facility under
2 this section may be used—

3 “(A) to repair, restore, reconstruct, or re-
4 place the public or private nonprofit facility
5 damaged or destroyed by a major disaster to
6 applicable building codes as of the time of re-
7 pair, restoration, reconstruction, or replace-
8 ment, including incorporating mitigation meas-
9 ures consistent with disaster risks for the geo-
10 graphical area;

11 “(B) to repair, restore, incorporate mitiga-
12 tion measures, or expand other selected public
13 facilities;

14 “(C) to construct new facilities;

15 “(D) and combined to construct a consoli-
16 dated facility or facilities of a State, local gov-
17 ernment, or owner or operator of a private non-
18 profit facility; or

19 “(E) to fund hazard mitigation measures
20 that the State or local government determines
21 necessary to meet a need for governmental serv-
22 ices and functions in the area affected by the
23 major disaster.

24 “(2) COST ESTIMATION.—

1 “(A) AMOUNT OF GRANTS.—The amount
2 of a grant made available pursuant to sub-
3 section (a) shall be determined, without regard
4 to preexisting condition, based on the estimated
5 cost to repair, restore, reconstruct, or replace
6 the public or private nonprofit facility damaged
7 or destroyed by a major disaster to applicable
8 building codes as of the time of repair, restora-
9 tion, reconstruction, or replacement. Such cost
10 estimate shall—

11 “(i) be developed by an appropriately
12 licensed professional;

13 “(ii) include the cost of incorporating
14 mitigation measures consistent with dis-
15 aster risks for the geographical area;

16 “(iii) include associated expenses in-
17 cluding labor costs, management costs,
18 materials, and any other costs to repair,
19 restore, reconstruct, or replace the im-
20 pacted facility; and

21 “(iv) include the cost of developing
22 such estimate.

23 “(B) PRESUMPTION OF ACCURACY.—The
24 cost estimate carried out under subparagraph
25 (A) shall be presumed to be accurate and rea-

1 sonable unless there is evidence of criminal
2 fraud.

3 “(3) SUBMISSION.—Upon submission by the
4 applicant of the cost estimate carried out under
5 paragraph (2), any review by the Administrator shall
6 be completed not later than 90 days after the receipt
7 of such estimate. In evaluating whether such cost es-
8 timation is accurate and reasonable, the Adminis-
9 trator may not consider preexisting condition and
10 the evaluation shall be conducted by an appro-
11 priately licensed professional with familiarity with
12 the relevant geographical location, including market
13 considerations and availability of labor and materials
14 for the applicable project. Unless there is evidence of
15 criminal fraud, such estimate shall be deemed to be
16 approved not later than 90 days after the submis-
17 sion of such estimate.

18 “(4) AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS.—Not later than
19 30 days after the approval of a cost estimate under
20 this subsection, the Administrator shall make the
21 grant funds available to the applicant.

22 “(5) ONE-TIME ADJUSTMENT.—Not later than
23 2 years after such approval, the State, local govern-
24 ment, or person that owns or operates a private non-
25 profit facility may submit a revised cost estimate to

1 account for changes in labor, material, or other costs
2 associated with fluctuations in the market. Upon re-
3 ceipt of a revised cost estimate, the Administrator
4 shall review such revision in the same manner and
5 with the same time limitations as apply to the initial
6 cost estimate.

7 “(6) FINALITY OF APPROVALS.—Upon approval
8 of the grant or one-time adjustment, notwith-
9 standing any other provision of law, including sec-
10 tion 3716(e) of title 31, United States Code, unless
11 there is evidence of criminal fraud, no legal or ad-
12 ministrative action with respect to such approval or
13 adjustment, as applicable, to recover any payment
14 under this section shall be initiated in any forum.

15 “(7) SPECIAL RULE FOR LARGE, COMPLEX
16 PROJECTS.—

17 “(A) IN GENERAL.—A State, local govern-
18 ment, or owner or operator of a private non-
19 profit facility may, with the approval of the Ad-
20 ministrator, designate a large, complex infra-
21 structure project as a phased project.

22 “(B) SUBMISSION OF COST ESTIMATES.—
23 With respect to projects designated under sub-
24 paragraph (A), the respective applicant may

1 submit cost estimates for each phase designated
2 for such project.

3 “(C) APPROVALS.—The submissions for
4 each phase under subparagraph (B) shall be ap-
5 proved in the same manner and with the same
6 limitations as outlined in paragraphs (3)
7 through (5).

8 “(8) DEADLINE.—All cost estimates submitted
9 under this section shall be submitted not later than
10 5 years after the date of the respective major dis-
11 aster declaration under this title, unless the 5-year
12 period is extended by the President.

13 “(9) PROGRESS REPORTS.—

14 “(A) REPORTS.—A State, local govern-
15 ment, or owner or operator of a private non-
16 profit facility that receives funding under this
17 section shall, for each major disaster declared
18 for which funding was provided under this sec-
19 tion, submit an annual progress report to the
20 Administrator that includes—

21 “(i) a list with descriptions of projects
22 funded;

23 “(ii) a list and number of projects
24 permitted and commenced;

25 “(iii) a list of completed projects; and

1 “(iv) a list of remaining projects and
2 the status of such projects.

3 “(B) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.—Upon re-
4 ceipt of a report under this paragraph, the Ad-
5 ministrator shall make such report publicly
6 available on the website of the Federal Emer-
7 gency Management Agency.

8 “(10) INSPECTOR GENERAL REVIEW.—Not
9 later than 2 years after the date of enactment of
10 this section and annually thereafter, the inspector
11 general of the Federal Emergency Management
12 Agency, established in section 14 of the FEMA Act
13 of 2025, shall conduct a review and submit to the
14 committees described in subsection (a)(3) a report
15 containing—

16 “(A) a sampling of cost estimates approved
17 in the prior year and assess their reasonable-
18 ness taking into account labor, material, and
19 market conditions in the relevant locality at the
20 time of the estimate;

21 “(B) information on whether the Adminis-
22 trator has placed any overly burdensome re-
23 quirements on the applicant in the submission
24 process, including whether or not the Adminis-

1 trator has failed to accept submissions based on
2 nonsubstantive or technical reasons; and

3 “(C) any evidence of criminal fraud and
4 whether there have been any referrals for fur-
5 ther investigation or prosecution.

6 “(11) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

7 “(A) APPLICABLE BUILDING CODES.—The
8 term ‘applicable building codes’ means the lat-
9 est 2 published editions of relevant consensus-
10 based codes, specifications, and standards, in-
11 cluding amendments made by State, local, In-
12 dian tribal, or territorial governments during
13 the adoption process that incorporate the latest
14 hazard-resistant designs and establish criteria
15 for design, construction, and maintenance for
16 the relevant project.

17 “(B) APPROPRIATELY LICENSED PROFES-
18 SIONAL.—The term ‘appropriately licensed pro-
19 fessional’ means an individual who is an engi-
20 neer, architect, builder, cost estimator,
21 tradesperson, or similar professional (or com-
22 binations thereof, as needed) that is licensed,
23 certified, or authorized to work in the relevant
24 State to perform the type of work related to

1 producing a cost estimate for the relevant
2 project described under this subsection.

3 “(c) FUNDING.—

4 “(1) MINIMUM FEDERAL SHARE.—Except as
5 provided in paragraph (2), the Federal share of as-
6 sistance under this section shall be not less than 75
7 percent of the estimated cost of repair, restoration,
8 reconstruction, or replacement carried out under this
9 section.

10 “(2) REDUCED FEDERAL SHARE.—The Presi-
11 dent may reduce the Federal share of assistance
12 under this section to not less than 65 percent
13 through a sliding scale following an event associated
14 with a major disaster in which a State or Indian
15 tribal government has failed to implement appro-
16 priate mitigation measures to address the hazard
17 that caused the damage. Such mitigation measures
18 shall include—

19 “(A) establishing and maintaining State-
20 funded mitigation programs dedicated to invest-
21 ment in State and local mitigation projects for
22 public and private nonprofit facilities other than
23 projects carried out with Federal funds;

1 “(B) maintaining specified insurance on
2 the facilities subject to projects described under
3 subparagraph (A);

4 “(C) employing qualified State and local
5 emergency management and personnel; and

6 “(D) using non-Federal funding sources to
7 complete projects in the preapproved project
8 mitigation plan approved under section 322(f).

9 “(3) INCREASED FEDERAL SHARE.—

10 “(A) INCENTIVE MEASURES.—The Presi-
11 dent may provide incentives to a State or Tribal
12 government to invest in measures that increase
13 readiness for, and resilience from, a major dis-
14 aster by recognizing such investments through
15 a sliding scale that increases the minimum Fed-
16 eral share to 85 percent. Such measures shall
17 include—

18 “(i) establishing and maintaining a
19 dedicated disaster account;

20 “(ii) establishing and maintaining
21 State risk management programs with
22 dedicated funding for third-party insurance
23 policies, captive insurance, and actuarially
24 sound self-insurance risk pools that insure

1 public facilities against future disaster
2 risk;

3 “(iii) establishing and maintaining
4 other disaster programs managed and
5 funded by the State, including disaster as-
6 sistance to individuals;

7 “(iv) facilitating participation in the
8 community rating system;

9 “(v) granting tax incentives for
10 projects that reduce risk;

11 “(vi) facilitating the adoption and en-
12 forcement of 1 of the 2 latest editions of
13 relevant consensus-based codes, specifica-
14 tions, and standards, including amend-
15 ments made by State, local, Indian tribal,
16 or territorial governments during the adop-
17 tion process that incorporate the latest
18 hazard-resistant designs and establish cri-
19 teria for the design, construction, and
20 maintenance of residential structures and
21 facilities that may be eligible for assistance
22 under this Act for purposes of protecting
23 the health, safety, and general welfare of
24 the buildings’ users against disasters;

1 “(vii) establishing robust floodplain
2 management standards;

3 “(viii) updating State risk assess-
4 ments with future projections;

5 “(ix) integrating hazard mitigation
6 planning into resource management plans;
7 and

8 “(x) incorporating multi-beneficial
9 natural systems and nature-based solutions
10 in disaster resilience efforts.

11 “(B) SAVINGS CLAUSE.—Nothing in this
12 paragraph prevents the President from increas-
13 ing the Federal cost share above 85 percent.

14 “(4) CONSIDERATIONS.—In making cost-share
15 determinations under this subsection, the President
16 shall consider—

17 “(A) whether a county, or county equiva-
18 lents, impacted by a disaster has done signifi-
19 cantly more to implement the resilience meas-
20 ures listed in subparagraphs (A) through (D) of
21 paragraph (2) and clauses (i) through (x) of
22 paragraph (3)(A); and

23 “(B) the total population and capacity of
24 each State to implement such measures.

25 “(5) COMBINED SOURCES OF FUNDING.—

1 “(A) IN GENERAL.—Grant funding re-
2 ceived under this section may be used in com-
3 bination with other Federal funding and private
4 sector funding.

5 “(B) CONFLICTING STANDARDS.—In any
6 case in which a building code or mitigation
7 standard is in conflict across Federal agencies
8 of a combined funding project described in sub-
9 paragraph (A), any codes or standards promul-
10 gated by the President, through the Adminis-
11 trator, pursuant to this Act shall be applied.”.

12 (b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

13 (1) SUNSETS.—Section 406 of the Robert T.
14 Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance
15 Act (42 U.S.C. 5172) is amended by adding at the
16 end the following:

17 “(f) OPTIONS.—A State, local government, or owner
18 or operator of a private nonprofit facility eligible for as-
19 sistance under this section for a project for which an appli-
20 cation has been submitted before the date of enactment
21 of this subsection may opt to receive a grant pursuant to
22 section 409 in lieu of contributions available under this
23 section.

24 “(g) SUNSET.—

1 “(1) LIMITATION ON APPLICATIONS.—No appli-
2 cation may be approved under this section if such
3 application is submitted on or after the date that is
4 180 days after the date of enactment of this sub-
5 section.

6 “(2) SUNSET OF CERTAIN AUTHORITIES.—The
7 authorities under subsections (a) through (c) and
8 subsections (e) through (f) of this section shall ter-
9minate on December 31, 2032.”.

10 (2) PUBLIC ASSISTANCE PROGRAM ALTER-
11 NATIVE PROCEDURES.—Section 428 of the Robert
12 T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assist-
13 ance Act (42 U.S.C. 5189f) is amended—

14 (A) in subsection (b) by striking “406,”;

15 (B) in subsection (e)—

16 (i) by striking “The alternative proce-
17 dures” and all that follows through “and
18 502(a)(5)—” and inserting “For debris re-
19 moval under sections 403(a)(3)(A), 407,
20 and 502(a)(5), the President shall adopt
21 alternative procedures for—”;

22 (ii) by redesignating subparagraphs
23 (A) through (F) as paragraphs (1) through
24 (6), respectively, and adjusting the mar-
25 gins accordingly; and

1 (iii) in paragraph (6), as so redesignated,
2 nated, by redesignating clauses (i) through
3 (iii) as subparagraphs (A) through (C), re-
4 spectively, and adjusting the margins ac-
5 cordingly; and

6 (C) by striking subsection (h).

7 (3) REPAIR, RESTORATION, AND REPLACEMENT
8 OF DAMAGED FACILITIES.—

9 (A) PREDISASTER HAZARD MITIGATION.—

10 Section 203(i) of the Robert T. Stafford Dis-
11 aster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42
12 U.S.C. 5133(i)) is amended by inserting “409,”
13 after “408,” each place it appears.

14 (B) INSURANCE.—Section 311 of the Rob-
15 ert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency
16 Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5154) is amended—

17 (i) in subsection (a)(1) by inserting
18 “or 409” after “section 406”;

19 (ii) in subsection (b) by inserting “or
20 409” after “section 406”; and

21 (iii) in subsection (c) by striking “sec-
22 tion 406 or 422” and inserting “section
23 406, 409, or 422” each place it appears.

24 (C) MANAGEMENT COSTS.—Section
25 324(b)(2)(B) of the Robert T. Stafford Dis-

1 aster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42
2 U.S.C. 5165b(b)(2)(B)) is amended by insert-
3 ing “409,” after “407,”.

4 (D) SPECIFIED INSURANCE.—Section
5 406(d) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Re-
6 lief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C.
7 5172(d)) is amended—

8 (i) in paragraph (1) by striking
9 “available under this section” and insert-
10 ing “available under this section or section
11 409”; and

12 (ii) in paragraph (2) by striking
13 “under this section” and inserting “under
14 this section or section 409”.

15 (E) SIMPLIFIED PROCEDURE.—Section
16 422(a) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Re-
17 lief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C.
18 5189(a)) is amended—

19 (i) in paragraph (1) by inserting “or
20 409” after “section 406”; and

21 (ii) in the matter following paragraph
22 (3) by striking “407, or 502” and insert-
23 ing “407, 409, or 502”.

24 (F) AGENCY ACCOUNTABILITY.—Section
25 430 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief

1 and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C.
2 5189h) is amended—

3 (i) in subsection (a) by inserting “or
4 409” after “section 406”; and

5 (ii) in subsection (e)(1) by inserting
6 “409,” after “407,”.

7 (c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by
8 this section shall take effect on the date that is 180 days
9 after the date of enactment of this Act.

10 (d) REGULATIONS.—

11 (1) APPLICATION.—Any regulations or policies
12 in effect on the date of enactment of this Act related
13 to Public Assistance or related assistance that con-
14 flict or are inconsistent with this section, including
15 subsections (i), (k), and (l) of section 206.201 of
16 title 44, Code of Federal Regulations, and section
17 206.202 of such title shall not apply to section 409
18 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emer-
19 gency Assistance Act, as added by this section.

20 (2) NOTIFICATION.—Not later than 60 days
21 after the date of enactment of this Act, the Adminis-
22 trator shall notify the Committee on Transportation
23 and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives
24 and the Committee on Homeland Security and Gov-
25 ernmental Affairs of the Senate of any regulations

1 in effect on the date of enactment of this Act that
2 the Administrator intends to apply to such section
3 409. Such notification shall include a justification
4 and specify the ambiguity the regulation is intended
5 to clarify.

6 (3) POLICIES.—Not later than 60 days after
7 the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator
8 shall provide the Committee on Transportation and
9 Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and
10 the Committee on Homeland Security and Govern-
11 mental Affairs of the Senate any written policies and
12 procedures in effect on the date of enactment of this
13 Act that the Administration intends to apply to
14 carry out this section.

15 **SEC. 102. TASK FORCE TO ADDRESS BACKLOG OF OPEN DE-**
16 **CLARED DISASTERS.**

17 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Administrator of the
18 Federal Emergency Management Agency shall establish a
19 declared disasters task force (in this section referred to
20 as the “Task Force”) to develop processes and mecha-
21 nisms necessary for the Administrator to eliminate the
22 current backlog of open declared disasters.

23 (b) COMPOSITION.—

1 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Task Force established
2 under subsection (a) shall include the following
3 members:

4 (A) The Administrator, who shall serve as
5 the chair of the Task Force.

6 (B) The Associate Administrator within
7 the Office of Response and Recovery.

8 (C) The Regional Administrator for Region
9 4.

10 (D) The Regional Administrator for Re-
11 gion 6.

12 (E) The Regional Administrator for Re-
13 gion 9.

14 (F) The Division Director for Public As-
15 sistance within the Office of Response and Re-
16 covery.

17 (G) Any other subject matter expert who is
18 employed by the Agency, as the Administrator
19 determines appropriate.

20 (2) DETAILEES.—Members of the Task Force
21 may detail employees who are employed by the
22 Agency to assist the Administrator in fulfilling the
23 duties of the Task Force.

24 (c) DUTIES.—The Task Force established under sub-
25 section (a) shall—

1 (1) establish a temporary office within the
2 Agency to address open declared disasters;

3 (2) identify the barriers the Agency has experi-
4 enced in closing out the backlog;

5 (3) examine any challenges in reducing the
6 number of open declared disasters that are caused
7 by carrying out the program under section 205 of
8 the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emer-
9 gency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5135);

10 (4) make recommendations on how to expedite
11 the appeals of assistance denial process under sec-
12 tion 423 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief
13 and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5189a);

14 (5) identify any barriers preventing the closeout
15 of the excessive backlog; and

16 (6) coordinate efforts with any processes imple-
17 mented by Agency to address the number of open
18 declared disasters, including the Backlog Adminis-
19 trative Closeout Process as outlined in the Public
20 Assistance Backlog Strategy Implementation Guid-
21 ance adopted June 2024.

22 (d) COMPLETION OF TASK FORCE ACTIVITIES.—

23 (1) SUBMISSION OF RESULTS.—Not later than
24 1 year after the establishment of the Task Force
25 under subsection (a), the Task Force shall submit to

1 the Administrator the results of the activities carried
2 out under subsection (c).

3 (2) SUNSET.—The Task Force established
4 under this section shall be terminated upon submis-
5 sion of the results pursuant to paragraph (1).

6 (e) BRIEFINGS.—

7 (1) INITIAL BRIEFING.—Not later than 180
8 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Ad-
9 ministrator shall brief the appropriate congressional
10 committees on the status of the Agency’s progress in
11 reducing the backlog and any other activities of the
12 Task Force.

13 (2) SEMIANNUAL BRIEFINGS.—The Adminis-
14 trator shall provide semiannual briefings to the ap-
15 propriate congressional committees until the Agency
16 closes out 800 declared disasters in its backlog.

17 (3) YEARLY.—Not later than 1 year after the
18 date of enactment of this Act, and annually there-
19 after so long as any excessive open declared disas-
20 ters remain, the Administrator shall provide to the
21 appropriate congressional committees a briefing on
22 the Agency’s closeout of its excessive backlog. Such
23 briefing may be conducted concurrently with a semi-
24 annual briefing under paragraph (2).

25 (f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

1 (1) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMIT-
2 TEES.—The term “appropriate congressional com-
3 mittees” means—

4 (A) the Committee on Transportation and
5 Infrastructure of the House of Representatives;

6 (B) the Committee on Homeland Security
7 and Governmental Affairs of the Senate; and

8 (C) the Committees on Appropriations of
9 the House of Representatives and the Senate.

10 (2) BACKLOG.—The term “backlog” means,
11 with respect to a declared disaster—

12 (A) the period of performance for the de-
13 clared disaster has concluded; and

14 (B) products and services carried out by
15 the Agency remain to be delivered.

16 (3) DECLARED DISASTERS.—The term “de-
17 clared disasters” means—

18 (A) any major disaster declared under sec-
19 tion 401 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Re-
20 lief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C.
21 5170), including any grant program relating to
22 such a major disaster;

23 (B) any emergency declared under section
24 501 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief
25 and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C.

1 5191), including any grant program relating to
2 such an emergency; and

3 (C) any assistance provided for fire man-
4 agement under section 420 of the Robert T.
5 Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assist-
6 ance Act (42 U.S.C. 5187), including any grant
7 program relating to such fire management.

8 (4) EXCESSIVE BACKLOG.—The term “excessive
9 backlog” means any declared disaster that—

10 (A) is an open declared disaster; and

11 (B) the declaration of which occurred not
12 earlier than 10 years ago.

13 (g) CLOSEOUT REQUIREMENTS.—

14 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall di-
15 rect each Regional Administrator to close out a de-
16 clared disaster in the backlog or the excessive back-
17 log, and disperse the remaining fund balances, as
18 soon as is practicable after the date on which 90
19 percent of the costs expended for all approved
20 projects or awards relating to such declared disas-
21 ters are validated.

22 (2) AGREEMENTS.—A closeout described under
23 paragraph (1) shall include reaching an agreement
24 for projects or awards that are in active litigation,
25 as the Administrator considers appropriate.

1 (3) COST ESTIMATES.—The Administrator shall
2 close out a declared disaster described in paragraph
3 (1), notwithstanding section 3716(e) of title 31,
4 United States Code, based on cost estimates.

5 (h) GAO REVIEW.—Not later than 2 years after the
6 date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General
7 of the United States shall conduct a review and submit
8 a report to Congress evaluating—

9 (1) the effectiveness of the activities of the
10 Task Force described in subsection (c); and

11 (2) the progress of the Administrator in reduc-
12 ing the excessive backlog.

13 **SEC. 103. DISASTER DECLARATION DAMAGE THRESHOLDS.**

14 (a) IN GENERAL.—In making recommendations to
15 the President regarding the eligibility of a State impacted
16 by a major disaster declared under section 401 of the Rob-
17 ert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance
18 Act (42 U.S.C. 5170), the Administrator of the Federal
19 Emergency Management Agency shall use as a factor for
20 consideration whether the impacted counties, or subdivi-
21 sion therein, in such State meet the definition of an eco-
22 nomically distressed community under section 301.3(a) of
23 title 13, Code of Federal Regulations, or a rural area
24 under section 343(a) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural
25 Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1991(a)).

1 (b) **ADDITIONAL AUTHORIZATION.**—In all cases
2 where assistance under section 409 of the Robert T. Staf-
3 ford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, as
4 added by this Act, is authorized for a county, or a subdivi-
5 sion therein, that meets the definition of an economically
6 distressed community under section 301.3(a) of title 13,
7 Code of Federal Regulations, or a rural area under section
8 343(a) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development
9 Act (7 U.S.C. 1991(a)), the President shall provide assist-
10 ance under section 408 of such Act.

11 (c) **REVISIONS TO GUIDANCE, POLICIES, AND REGU-**
12 **LATIONS.**—The Administrator shall take such actions as
13 are necessary to revise any policies, guidance, or regula-
14 tions of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to
15 implement subsections (a) and (b).

16 (d) **SAVINGS CLAUSE.**—Nothing in this section shall
17 be construed to constrain the authority of the President
18 to make a determination of eligibility for assistance under
19 section 409 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and
20 Emergency Assistance Act, as added by this Act.

21 **SEC. 104. FEDERAL PERMITTING IMPROVEMENT.**

22 Section 316 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief
23 and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5159) is
24 amended to read as follows:

1 **“SEC. 316. FEDERAL PERMITTING IMPROVEMENT.**

2 “(a) IN GENERAL.—

3 “(1) PROTECTION OF ENVIRONMENT.—An ac-
4 tion which is taken or assistance which is provided
5 pursuant to section 402, 403, 406, 407, 409, or 502
6 shall not be deemed a major Federal action signifi-
7 cantly affecting the quality of the human environ-
8 ment within the meaning of the National Environ-
9 mental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.)
10 if the action has the effect of repairing, restoring,
11 reconstructing, or replacing a facility that is dam-
12 aged by a declared emergency or major disaster pur-
13 suant to section 401 or 501 to applicable building
14 codes at the time of repair, restoration, reconstruc-
15 tion, or replacement, including incorporating mitiga-
16 tion measures consistent with disaster risks for the
17 geographic area, provided that facility improvements
18 and mitigation activities occur in the same location
19 of the original facility.

20 “(2) STATUTORY CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in
21 this section shall alter or affect the applicability of
22 the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42
23 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) to other Federal actions taken
24 under this Act or under any other provisions of law.

25 “(b) EXEMPTIONS AND EXPEDITED PROCEDURES.—

1 “(1) STORMWATER DISCHARGE PERMITS.—A
2 general permit for stormwater discharges from con-
3 struction activities, if available, issued by the Ad-
4 ministrators of the Environmental Protection Agency
5 or the director of a State program under section
6 402(p) of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act
7 (33 U.S.C. 1242(p)), as applicable, shall apply to re-
8 pair, restoration, reconstruction, or replacement
9 under subsection (a), on submission of a notice of
10 intent to be subject to the permit.

11 “(2) EMERGENCY PROCEDURES.—The emer-
12 gency procedures for issuing permits in accordance
13 with section 325.2(e)(4) of title 33, Code of Federal
14 Regulations, shall apply to repair, restoration, recon-
15 struction, or replacement under subsection (a), and
16 such repair, restoration, reconstruction, or replace-
17 ment shall be considered an emergency under such
18 section.

19 “(3) NATIONAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION ACT
20 EXEMPTION.—Repair, restoration, reconstruction, or
21 replacement under subsection (a) shall be eligible for
22 a waiver from the requirements of the National His-
23 toric Preservation Act of 1966 pursuant to part 78
24 of title 36, Code of Federal Regulations.

1 “(4) ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT EXEMPTION.—
2 An exemption from the requirements of section 7(a)
3 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C.
4 1536(a)) shall apply to repair, restoration, recon-
5 struction, or replacement under subsection (a) and,
6 if the President makes the determination required
7 under section 7(p) of such Act, the determinations
8 required under subsections (g) and (h) of such sec-
9 tion shall be deemed to be made.

10 “(5) EXPEDITED CONSULTATION UNDER EN-
11 DANGERED SPECIES ACT.—Expedited consultation
12 pursuant to section 402.05 of title 50, Code of Fed-
13 eral Regulations, shall apply to repair, restoration,
14 reconstruction, or replacement under subsection (a).

15 “(6) OTHER EXEMPTIONS.—Any repair, res-
16 toration, reconstruction, or replacement that is ex-
17 empt under paragraph (5) shall also be exempt from
18 requirements under—

19 “(A) the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (16
20 U.S.C. 703 et seq.);

21 “(B) the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (16
22 U.S.C. 1271 et seq.); and

23 “(C) the Fish and Wildlife Coordination
24 Act (16 U.S.C. 661 et seq.).

25 “(c) STATE-MANAGED REVIEW PROCESS.—

1 “(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subsections (a),
2 (b), and (d), with the written agreement of the Ad-
3 ministrators and a State, which may be in the form
4 of a memorandum of understanding, the Adminis-
5 trator may assign, and the State may assume, the
6 responsibilities of the Administrator with respect to
7 1 or more disaster recovery projects within the State
8 under the National Environmental Policy Act of
9 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) and the National
10 Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (54 U.S.C.
11 300101 et seq.), so long as—

12 “(A) the State shall assume responsibilities
13 under this section subject to the same proce-
14 dural and substantive requirements that would
15 apply if such responsibilities were carried out by
16 the Administrator, including the exemptions
17 and expedited procedures under subsection (b);

18 “(B) any responsibility of the Adminis-
19 trator not explicitly assumed by the State under
20 such agreement shall remain the responsibility
21 of the Administrator;

22 “(C) nothing in such agreement preempts
23 or interferes with any power, jurisdiction, re-
24 sponsibility, or authority of an agency, other
25 than the Administrator, under applicable law

1 (including regulations), with respect to a
2 project;

3 “(D) the Administrator shall not require a
4 State, as a condition of participation in the pro-
5 gram, to forego project delivery methods that
6 are otherwise permissible for projects; and

7 “(E) a State assuming the responsibilities
8 of the Administrator under this section for a
9 specific project may use funds for attorney’s
10 fees directly attributable to eligible activities as-
11 sociated with the project for an increase in
12 management costs.

13 “(2) ASSUMPTION OF RESPONSIBILITY.—If a
14 State assumes responsibility under paragraph (1)—

15 “(A) the Administrator may assign to such
16 State, and such State may assume, all or part
17 of the responsibilities of the Administrator for
18 environmental review, consultation, or other ac-
19 tion required under the National Environmental
20 Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.)
21 and the National Historic Preservation Act of
22 1966 (54 U.S.C. 300101 et seq.), pertaining to
23 the review or approval of a specific project; and

24 “(B) at the request of such State, the Ad-
25 ministrator may also assign to such State, and

1 such State may assume, the responsibilities of
2 the Administrator with respect to 1 or more
3 disaster recovery projects within the State
4 under the National Environmental Policy Act of
5 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) and the National
6 Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (54 U.S.C.
7 300101 et seq.).

8 “(3) RULEMAKING AUTHORITY.—Not later than
9 180 days after the date of enactment of the FEMA
10 Act of 2025, the Administrator shall promulgate
11 regulations that establish requirements relating to
12 information required to be contained in any request
13 of a State to enter into a written agreement under
14 paragraph (1), including, at a minimum—

15 “(A) a description of the projects or class-
16 es of projects for which the State anticipates
17 exercising the authority under this subsection;

18 “(B) verification of the financial and per-
19 sonnel resources necessary to carry out such
20 authority;

21 “(C) a demonstration of compliance with
22 any applicable public notice law of the State, in-
23 cluding copies of comments received from a so-
24 licitation carried out pursuant to any such law;
25 and

1 “(D) a demonstration of compliance with
2 applicable Federal environmental and historic
3 preservation law.

4 “(4) WRITTEN AGREEMENT.—A written agree-
5 ment under this section shall—

6 “(A) be executed by the Governor of the
7 respective State;

8 “(B) provide that the State—

9 “(i) agrees to presume all or part of
10 the responsibilities of the Administrator
11 described in paragraph (1);

12 “(ii) expressly consents, on behalf of
13 the State, to accept the jurisdiction of the
14 Federal courts for the compliance, dis-
15 charge, and enforcement of any responsi-
16 bility of the Administrator assumed by the
17 State; and

18 “(iii) certifies that State laws (includ-
19 ing regulations) are in effect that—

20 “(I) authorize the State to take
21 the actions necessary to carry out the
22 responsibilities being assumed under
23 such agreement; and

24 “(II) are comparable to section
25 552 of title 5, United States Code, in-

1 including providing that any decision re-
2 garding the public availability of a
3 document under such State laws is re-
4 viewable by a court of competent ju-
5 risdiction; and

6 “(III) agree to maintain the fi-
7 nancial resources necessary to carry
8 out the responsibilities being assumed;

9 “(C) require the State to provide to the
10 Administrator any information the Adminis-
11 trator reasonably considers necessary to ensure
12 that the State is adequately carrying out the re-
13 sponsibilities assigned to the State under such
14 agreement;

15 “(D) have a term of not more than 5
16 years; and

17 “(E) be renewable.

18 “(5) JURISDICTION.—

19 “(A) IN GENERAL.—The United States
20 district courts shall have exclusive jurisdiction
21 over any civil action against a State for failure
22 to carry out any responsibility of the State
23 under this section.

24 “(B) LEGAL STANDARDS AND REQUIRE-
25 MENTS.—A civil action under paragraph (1)

1 shall be governed by the legal standards and re-
2 quirements that would apply in such a civil ac-
3 tion against the Administrator had the Admin-
4 istrator taken the actions in question.

5 “(C) INTERVENTION.—The Administrator
6 shall have the right to intervene in any action
7 described in paragraph (1).

8 “(6) LIABILITY.—A State that assumes respon-
9 sibility under paragraph (2) shall be solely respon-
10 sible and solely liable for carrying out, in lieu of and
11 without further approval of the Administrator, the
12 responsibilities under such paragraph, until the par-
13 ticipation of the State is terminated under para-
14 graph (8).

15 “(7) LIMITATION ON AGREEMENTS.—Nothing
16 in this section permits a State to assume any rule-
17 making authority of the Administrator under any
18 Federal law.

19 “(8) TERMINATION.—

20 “(A) TERMINATION BY ADMINISTRATOR.—
21 The Administrator may only terminate the par-
22 ticipation of any State under this subsection
23 if—

24 “(i) the Administrator determines
25 that the State is not adequately carrying

1 out the responsibilities assigned to the
2 State in a written agreement under this
3 subsection;

4 “(ii) the Administrator provides to the
5 State—

6 “(I) a notification of a deter-
7 mination of noncompliance;

8 “(II) a period of not less than
9 120 days to take such corrective ac-
10 tion as the Administrator determines
11 to be necessary to comply with the ap-
12 plicable agreement; and

13 “(III) on request of the Gov-
14 ernor, a detailed description of each
15 responsibility in need of corrective ac-
16 tion regarding an inadequacy identi-
17 fied under this subparagraph; and

18 “(iii) the State, after the notification
19 and period provided under clause (ii), fails
20 to take satisfactory corrective action, as
21 determined by the Administrator.

22 “(B) TERMINATION BY STATE.—A State
23 may terminate the participation of the State in
24 the program at any time by providing to the
25 Administrator a notice by not later than the

1 date that is 90 days before the date of termi-
2 nation, and subject to such terms and condi-
3 tions as the Administrator may provide.

4 “(9) AUDITS.—To ensure compliance by a
5 State with any agreement of the State under this
6 subsection (including compliance by the State with
7 all Federal laws for which responsibility is assumed
8 under paragraph (2)), for each State participating in
9 an agreement under this subsection, the inspector
10 general of the Federal Emergency Management
11 Agency established in section 14 of the FEMA Act
12 of 2025, shall—

13 “(A) meet with the State not later than
14 180 days after signing an agreement to review
15 how the agreement is being implement and plan
16 the first annual audit, including consulting with
17 the State on the selection of the audit team
18 members;

19 “(B) conduct an annual audit for each
20 year the State is participating in an agreement
21 under this subsection;

22 “(C) in the case of an agreement with a
23 duration of more than 5 years, conduct a com-
24 prehensive audit covering the first 5 years of
25 such agreement;

1 “(D) complete each audit within 180 days,
2 including time for public comment and re-
3 sponses;

4 “(E) make all audits available to the public
5 for comment; and

6 “(F) respond to public comments not later
7 than 60 days after the last day of the comment
8 period.

9 “(10) MONITORING.—After a State has been
10 participating in an agreement under this subsection
11 for 4 years, the Administrator shall continue to
12 monitor the compliance of such State with the agree-
13 ment, including whether the State is providing
14 enough funding to meet the obligations of such
15 agreement.

16 “(11) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—The Adminis-
17 trator shall submit to Congress an annual report
18 that describes the administration of this subsection.

19 “(12) RELATIONSHIP TO LOCALLY ADMINIS-
20 TERED PROJECTS.—A State assuming authority
21 under a written agreement under this subsection
22 may, as appropriate and at the request of a local
23 government—

1 “(A) exercise such authority on behalf of
2 the local government for a locally administered
3 project; or

4 “(B) provide guidance and training on con-
5 solidating and minimizing the documentation
6 and environmental analyses necessary for spon-
7 sors of a locally administered project to comply
8 with the National Environmental Policy Act of
9 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) and any com-
10 parable requirements under State law.

11 “(13) AGENCY DEEMED TO BE FEDERAL AGEN-
12 CY.—A State agency assuming responsibility under
13 an agreement under this subsection shall be deemed
14 to be an agency for the purposes of section 2412 of
15 title 28, United States Code.

16 “(d) DEFINITION OF APPLICABLE BUILDING
17 CODES.—In this section, the term ‘applicable building
18 codes’ has the meaning given the term in section
19 409(b)(11).

20 “(e) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this sec-
21 tion shall alter or affect the applicability of the National
22 Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et
23 seq.) to other Federal actions taken under this Act or
24 under any other provisions of law.”.

1 **SEC. 105. UNIFIED FEDERAL REVIEW.**

2 Title III of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief
3 and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170 et seq.)
4 is amended by striking section 429 and inserting the fol-
5 lowing:

6 **“SEC. 429. COORDINATION OF REQUIRED FEDERAL RE-**
7 **VIEWS.**

8 “(a) IN GENERAL.—In order to expedite disaster re-
9 covery, the Administrator shall establish a unified inter-
10 agency review process to ensure compliance with environ-
11 mental and historical requirements under Federal law, in-
12 cluding the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969
13 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) and the National Historic Pres-
14 ervation Act of 1966 (54 U.S.C. 300101 et seq.), relating
15 to projects carried out through assistance provided under
16 this Act, consistent with applicable law.

17 “(b) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 1 year after
18 the date of enactment of the FEMA Act of 2025, and in
19 consultation with the Council on Environmental Quality
20 and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the
21 Administrator shall—

22 “(1) formulate and implement administrative,
23 procedural, and policy mechanisms to enable the
24 Federal Emergency Management Agency to act as
25 the lead agency ensuring completion of the environ-

1 mental and historical review process for projects in
2 a timely, coordinated, and responsible manner;

3 “(2) carry out the obligations of the Federal
4 Emergency Management Agency with respect to a
5 project under any other applicable law concurrently,
6 and in conjunction with, other environmental and
7 historical reviews and authorizations being con-
8 ducted by other cooperating and participating agen-
9 cies, with the Federal Emergency Management
10 Agency as the lead agency; and

11 “(3) in the case in which an environmental im-
12 pact statement is required for a project, prepare one
13 document under section 107(b) of the National En-
14 vironmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C.
15 4336a(b)) for such project unless the lead agency
16 provides justification in the coordinated project plan
17 that multiple environmental documents are more ef-
18 ficient for project review and authorization.

19 “(c) CONSIDERATIONS.—

20 “(1) IN GENERAL.—As early as practicable dur-
21 ing an environmental and historical review, but not
22 later than the commencement of scoping for a
23 project requiring the preparation of an environ-
24 mental impact statement under the National Envi-
25 ronmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et

1 seq.), the lead agency shall engage the cooperating
2 agencies to determine the range of reasonable alter-
3 natives to be considered for a project.

4 “(2) COOPERATION.—The lead agency and each
5 cooperating and participating agency shall work co-
6 operatively to identify and resolve issues that could
7 delay completion of an environmental and historical
8 review or authorization required for the project
9 under applicable law or result in the denial of any
10 approval under applicable law, including—

11 “(A) the need for mitigation actions justi-
12 fied by the risk of natural hazards that are con-
13 sistent with the geographic area in which the
14 major disaster occurred; and

15 “(B) compliance challenges that may arise
16 as a result of the ongoing recovery from a
17 major disaster.

18 “(3) RANGE OF ALTERNATIVES.—The lead
19 agency shall determine the range of reasonable alter-
20 natives for consideration in any document that the
21 lead agency is responsible for preparing in the envi-
22 ronmental and historical review for the project.

23 “(4) METHODOLOGIES.—The lead agency shall
24 determine, in collaboration with each cooperating
25 and participating agency at appropriate times during

1 the review, the methodologies to be used and the
2 level of detail required in the analysis of each alter-
3 native determined under paragraph (3) for a project.

4 “(5) RESPONSIBILITIES.—

5 “(A) LEAD AGENCY.—The lead agency (as
6 such term is defined in section 111 of the Na-
7 tional Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42
8 U.S.C. 4336e)) shall make information avail-
9 able to each cooperating and participating agen-
10 cy and State as early as practicable in the envi-
11 ronmental and historical review regarding the
12 environmental, historic, and socioeconomic re-
13 sources located within the project area and the
14 general locations of the alternatives determined
15 under paragraph (3) under consideration.

16 “(B) COOPERATING AND PARTICIPATING
17 AGENCIES.—As early as practicable during an
18 environmental and historical review, cooperating
19 and participating agencies (as such terms are
20 defined in section 111 of the National Environ-
21 mental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4336e))
22 shall identify any issues of concern regarding
23 any potential environmental or historical im-
24 pacts of the project, including any issues that
25 could substantially delay or prevent an agency

1 from completing any environmental or historical
2 review or authorization required for the project,
3 and communicate any issues to the State.

4 “(6) PUBLIC COMMENT.—The lead agency shall
5 establish a comment period of not less than 45 days
6 and not more than 60 days after the date on which
7 a notice announcing availability of the environmental
8 impact statement is published in the Federal Reg-
9 ister to solicit comments from an agency or the pub-
10 lic on a draft environmental impact statement, un-
11 less—

12 “(A) the lead agency, the State, and any
13 cooperating agency agree to a longer deadline;
14 or

15 “(B) the lead agency, in consultation with
16 each cooperating agency, extends the deadline
17 for good cause.

18 “(7) RECORD OF DECISION.—Not later than 90
19 days after the date on which a final environmental
20 impact statement is issued, Federal agencies shall,
21 to the maximum extent practicable, issue a record of
22 decision for such environmental impact statement.

23 “(8) CATEGORIES OF PROJECTS.—The authori-
24 ties granted under this section may be exercised for
25 an individual project or a category of projects.

1 “(d) **RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.**—Nothing in this sec-
2 tion shall be construed to affect the applicability of section
3 316 to projects eligible under such section.”.

4 **SEC. 106. BLOCK GRANTS FOR SMALL DISASTERS.**

5 The Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emer-
6 gency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.) is amended
7 by adding at the end the following:

8 **“TITLE VIII—BLOCK GRANTS**
9 **FOR SMALL DISASTERS**

10 **“SEC. 801. BLOCK GRANTS FOR SMALL DISASTERS.**

11 “(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Governor of a State or the
12 governing body of an Indian tribal government for the
13 area in which a covered small disaster occurs may request
14 a lump sum payment of the estimated damages calculated
15 under subsection (b) for such disaster in lieu of any assist-
16 ance under the Public Assistance Program for such dis-
17 aster.

18 “(b) **CALCULATION.**—Notwithstanding the require-
19 ments of section 206.47(b) of title 44, Code of Federal
20 Regulations, a payment under subsection (a) shall be
21 equal to the amount that is 80 percent of the total esti-
22 mated cost of the Federal share under the Public Assist-
23 ance Program for a covered small disaster in the area of
24 jurisdiction of the State or Indian tribal government re-
25 questing such payment.

1 “(c) LIMITATIONS.—

2 “(1) IN GENERAL.—A State or Indian tribal
3 government receiving a payment under this section
4 may not receive assistance under the Public Assist-
5 ance Program with respect to the covered small dis-
6 aster for which a payment was accepted under this
7 section.

8 “(2) FINAL PAYMENT.—

9 “(A) IN GENERAL.—A payment under this
10 section may not be increased or decreased based
11 on actual costs calculated for a covered small
12 disaster.

13 “(B) EXCEPTION.—Notwithstanding sub-
14 paragraph (A), the Administrator may adjust a
15 payment under this section in the event of un-
16 foreseen circumstances at no fault of the appli-
17 cant.

18 “(3) SELECTION OF OPTION.—A State or In-
19 dian tribal government may designate to the Federal
20 Emergency Management Agency on an annual basis
21 the interest of such State or Indian tribal govern-
22 ment in participating in the small disaster authority.

23 “(4) INDICATION.—A State or Indian tribal
24 government shall indicate at the time of the submis-
25 sion of a request for a major disaster declaration

1 that such State or Indian tribal government is re-
2 questing assistance for such incident under this sec-
3 tion.

4 “(5) TIMING REQUIREMENT.—The Adminis-
5 trator and the State or Indian tribal government
6 shall—

7 “(A) reach an agreement on the amount
8 under subsection (b) not later than 90 days
9 after the incident; or

10 “(B) administer the incident under the
11 procedures and authorities for the Public As-
12 sistance Program.

13 “(6) ADMINISTRATIVE PLAN.—To be eligible for
14 assistance under this section, a State or Indian trib-
15 al government shall have an administrative plan ap-
16 proved by the Administrator in place at the time of
17 the obligation of funds provided under this section.

18 “(d) APPROVAL OF FUNDS.—The Administrator
19 shall approve funding for eligible disasters not later than
20 90 days after a receipt of a complete application, including
21 all required cost estimates and supporting documentation,
22 from the applicant. In evaluating whether such cost esti-
23 mate is accurate and reasonable, the Administrator may
24 not consider preexisting condition.

1 “(e) AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS.—Not later than 30
2 days after the approval of an application under this sec-
3 tion, the Administrator shall make the grant funds avail-
4 able to the applicant.

5 “(f) USE OF FUNDS.—A State or Indian tribal gov-
6 ernment receiving a payment under this section may use
7 such payment for recovery for the covered small disaster
8 in any manner determined appropriate by the respective
9 Governor or governing body of such State or Indian tribal
10 government if such funds—

11 “(1) address impacts and needs resulting from
12 the declared disaster incident;

13 “(2) are provided to State, Indian tribal govern-
14 ment, territorial and local government agencies, and
15 private nonprofit entities eligible for Public Assist-
16 ance Program funding; and

17 “(3) are used in a manner that complies with
18 applicable environmental, historic preservation, and
19 civil rights laws (including the National Environ-
20 mental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.)
21 and the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966
22 (54 U.S.C. 300101 et seq.)) and any applicable re-
23 siliency standards under section 203.

1 “(g) COMPLIANCE WITH OTHER LAWS AND REGULA-
2 TIONS.—A State or Indian tribal government shall be re-
3 sponsible for ensuring compliance under subsection (f)(3).

4 “(h) REPORT TO FEMA.—A State or governing body
5 of an Indian tribal government shall submit to the Federal
6 Emergency Management Agency an annual report of ex-
7 penses for a covered small disaster in the area of jurisdic-
8 tion of the respective State or Indian tribal government.

9 “(i) RULES OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this sec-
10 tion shall be construed to—

11 “(1) affect the eligibility of a State or Indian
12 tribal government for assistance under section 404;
13 or

14 “(2) affect any program in title IV or V that
15 is not a Public Assistance Program.

16 “(j) INSPECTOR GENERAL REVIEW.—Not later than
17 2 years after the date of enactment of the FEMA Act of
18 2025, and annually thereafter, the inspector general of the
19 Federal Emergency Management Agency established in
20 section 14 of such Act shall conduct a review and submit
21 to the Committee on Homeland Security and Govern-
22 mental Affairs of the Senate, the Committee on Transpor-
23 tation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives,
24 the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate, and the

1 Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representa-
2 tives a report containing—

3 “(1) information on the number of States and
4 Indian tribal governments that—

5 “(A) have designated to the Federal Emer-
6 gency Management Agency interest in partici-
7 pating in the small disaster authority under
8 subsection (c)(3); and

9 “(B) have requested assistance under this
10 section;

11 “(2) a sampling of the reports submitted to the
12 Federal Emergency Management Agency under sub-
13 section (h) and an assessment, based on such re-
14 ports, on whether funds provided under this section
15 for recovery from covered small disasters have been
16 used to address impacts and needs resulting from
17 such disasters; and

18 “(3) any evidence of criminal fraud and wheth-
19 er there have been any referrals for further inves-
20 tigation or prosecution.

21 “(k) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

22 “(1) COVERED SMALL DISASTER.—The term
23 ‘covered small disaster’ means a major disaster de-
24 clared under section 401 or an emergency declared
25 under section 501 with estimated damage eligible

1 under the Public Assistance Program of less than or
2 equal to 125 percent of the State's per capita indi-
3 cator.

4 “(2) PUBLIC ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.—The term
5 ‘Public Assistance Program’ means the programs
6 under sections 403, 406, 407, 409, and 502.”.

7 **SEC. 107. COMMON SENSE DEBRIS REMOVAL.**

8 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 407 of the Robert T.
9 Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act
10 (42 U.S.C. 5173) is amended—

11 (1) in subsection (a) by striking “, whenever he
12 determines it to be in the public interest,”; and

13 (2) by adding at the end the following:

14 “(f) PROHIBITION ON ADDITIONAL REQUIRE-
15 MENTS.—Except as required under subsection (b), the
16 President may not impose any additional requirements for
17 authorizing the removal of debris and wreckage on publicly
18 and privately owned lands and waters, or for making
19 grants for the purpose of such removal, under this sec-
20 tion.”.

21 (b) GUIDANCE.—The Administrator of the Federal
22 Emergency Management Agency shall revise any guidance
23 or regulations as necessary to reflect the amendments
24 made by this section.

25 (c) BEST PRACTICES.—

1 (1) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of
2 Congress that certain types of payment structures
3 for debris removal service contracts create challenges
4 for effective oversight, and disincentivize effective
5 clean-up, and increases costs.

6 (2) EFFECTIVE CONTRACTS.—Not later than 1
7 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Ad-
8 ministrator shall—

9 (A) complete a review of contracting for
10 debris removal services; and

11 (B) develop best practices for such con-
12 tracts that ensure effective debris removal,
13 speed, and appropriate accountability of costs
14 and oversight of performance.

15 **SEC. 108. DISASTER MANAGEMENT COSTS MODERNIZA-**
16 **TION.**

17 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 324 of the Robert T.
18 Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act
19 (42 U.S.C. 5165b) is amended—

20 (1) in subsection (b)(2)—

21 (A) by redesignating subparagraphs (A)
22 and (B) as clauses (i) and (ii), respectively, and
23 adjusting the margins accordingly; and

1 (B) in the matter preceding clause (i), as
2 so redesignated, by striking “provide the fol-
3 lowing percentage rates” and inserting “provide
4 “(A) excess funds for management costs as
5 described in subsection (c); and
6 “(B) the following percentage rates”;
7 (2) by redesignating subsection (c) as sub-
8 section (d); and
9 (3) by inserting after subsection (b) the fol-
10 lowing:
11 “(c) USE OF EXCESS FUNDS FOR MANAGEMENT
12 COSTS.—
13 “(1) DEFINITION OF EXCESS FUNDS FOR MAN-
14 AGEMENT COSTS.—In this subsection, the term ‘ex-
15 cess funds for management costs’ means the dif-
16 ference between—
17 “(A) the amount of the applicable specific
18 management costs authorized under subsection
19 (b)(1) and subsection (b)(2)(B); and
20 “(B) as of the date on which the grant
21 award is closed, the amount of funding for
22 management costs activities expended by the
23 grantee or subgrantee receiving the financial as-
24 sistance for costs described in subparagraph
25 (A).

1 “(2) AVAILABILITY OF EXCESS FUNDS FOR
2 MANAGEMENT COSTS.—The President may make
3 available to a grantee or subgrantee receiving finan-
4 cial assistance under section 403, 404, 406, 407,
5 409, or 502 any excess funds for management costs.

6 “(3) USE OF FUNDS.—Excess funds for man-
7 agement costs made available to a grantee or sub-
8 grantee under paragraph (2) may be used for—

9 “(A) activities associated with building ca-
10 pacity to prepare for, recover from, or mitigate
11 the impacts of a major disaster or emergency
12 declared under section 401 or 501, respectively;
13 and

14 “(B) management costs associated with
15 any—

16 “(i) major disaster;

17 “(ii) emergency;

18 “(iii) disaster preparedness measure;

19 or

20 “(iv) mitigation activity or measure
21 authorized under section 203, 204, 205, or
22 404.

23 “(4) AVAILABILITY.—Excess funds for manage-
24 ment costs made available to a grantee or sub-
25 grantee under paragraph (2) shall remain available

1 to the grantee or subgrantee until the date that is
2 5 years after the date on which the excess funds for
3 management costs are made available under para-
4 graph (2).”.

5 (b) APPLICABILITY.—The amendments made by sub-
6 section (a) shall apply with respect to any grant award
7 in relation to a major disaster or emergency declared
8 under section 401 or 501, respectively, of the Robert T.
9 Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act
10 (42 U.S.C. 5170, 5191)—

11 (1) the declaration of which is made on or after
12 the date of enactment of this Act; and

13 (2) that is funded with amounts appropriated
14 on or after the date of enactment of this Act.

15 (c) NO ADDITIONAL FUNDS.—No additional funds
16 are authorized to be appropriated to carry out the amend-
17 ments made by subsection (a).

18 **SEC. 109. STREAMLINING AND CONSOLIDATING INFORMA-**
19 **TION COLLECTION AND PRELIMINARY DAM-**
20 **AGE ASSESSMENTS.**

21 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1223 of the Disaster Re-
22 covery Reform Act of 2018 (Public Law 115–254) is
23 amended to read as follows:

1 **“SEC. 1223. STUDY TO STREAMLINE AND CONSOLIDATE IN-**
2 **FORMATION COLLECTION AND PRELIMINARY**
3 **DAMAGE ASSESSMENTS.**

4 “(a) INFORMATION COLLECTION.—Not later than 2
5 years after the date of enactment of the FEMA Act of
6 2025, the Administrator, in coordination with the Admin-
7 istrator of the Small Business Administration, the Sec-
8 retary of Housing and Urban Development, the Disaster
9 Assistance Working Group of the Council of the Inspectors
10 General on Integrity and Efficiency, and other appropriate
11 agencies, shall—

12 “(1) conduct a study and develop a plan, con-
13 sistent with law, under which the collection of infor-
14 mation from disaster assistance applicants and
15 grantees will be modified, streamlined, expedited, ef-
16 ficient, flexible, consolidated, and simplified to be
17 less burdensome, duplicative, and time-consuming
18 for applicants and grantees; and

19 “(2) develop a plan for the regular collection
20 and reporting of information on Federal disaster as-
21 sistance awarded, including the establishment and
22 maintenance of a website for presenting the informa-
23 tion to the public.

24 “(b) PRELIMINARY DAMAGE ASSESSMENTS.—Not
25 later than 2 years after the date of enactment of the
26 FEMA Act of 2025, the Administrator, in consultation

1 with the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity
2 and Efficiency, shall convene a working group on a regular
3 basis with the Secretary of Labor, the Director of the Of-
4 fice of Management and Budget, the Secretary of Health
5 and Human Services, the Administrator of the Small
6 Business Administration, the Secretary of Transportation,
7 the Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Devel-
8 opment, and other appropriate agencies as the Adminis-
9 trator considers necessary, to—

10 “(1) identify and describe the potential areas of
11 duplication or fragmentation in preliminary damage
12 assessments after disaster declarations;

13 “(2) determine the applicability of having one
14 Federal agency make the assessments for all agen-
15 cies; and

16 “(3) identify potential emerging technologies,
17 such as unmanned aircraft systems, consistent with
18 the requirements established in the FEMA Account-
19 ability, Modernization and Transparency Act of
20 2017 (42 U.S.C. 5121 note), to expedite the admin-
21 istration of preliminary damage assessments.

22 “(c) COMPREHENSIVE REPORT.—The Administrator
23 shall submit 1 comprehensive report that comprises the
24 plans developed under subsections (a)(1) and (a)(2) and
25 a report of the findings of the working group convened

1 under subsection (b), which may include recommenda-
2 tions, to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastruc-
3 ture of the House of Representatives and the Committee
4 on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the
5 Senate.

6 “(d) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.—The comprehensive re-
7 port required under subsection (c) shall be made available
8 to the public and posted on the website of the Federal
9 Emergency Management Agency—

10 “(1) in precompressed, easily downloadable
11 versions that are made available in all appropriate
12 formats; and

13 “(2) in machine-readable format, if applicable.

14 “(e) SOURCES OF INFORMATION.—In preparing the
15 comprehensive report under subsection (c), the Adminis-
16 trator may use any publication, database, or web-based
17 resource, and any information compiled by any govern-
18 ment agency, nongovernmental organization, or other enti-
19 ty that is made available.

20 “(f) BRIEFING.—Not later than 180 days after sub-
21 mission of the comprehensive report, the Administrator
22 and a member of the Council of the Inspectors General
23 on Integrity and Efficiency shall brief, upon request, the
24 Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the
25 House of Representatives and the Committee on Home-

1 land Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate on
2 the findings and any recommendations made in the com-
3 prehensive report.

4 “(g) IMPLEMENTATION.—Not later than 180 days
5 after the submission of the comprehensive report under
6 subsection (c), the Administrator shall implement any rec-
7 ommendations contained in such report.”.

8 (b) TECHNICAL AMENDMENT.—The item relating to
9 section 1223 in the table of contents of the FAA Reau-
10 thorization Act of 2018 (Public Law 115–254) is amended
11 to read as follows:

“Sec. 1223. Study to streamline and consolidate information collection and pre-
liminary damage assessments.”.

12 **SEC. 110. REASONABLE INCIDENT PERIODS.**

13 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 6 months after the
14 date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the
15 Federal Emergency Management Agency shall convene an
16 advisory panel consisting of emergency management per-
17 sonnel to assist the Agency in reviewing the process and
18 procedures related to the determination of incident periods
19 for all hazards for emergencies or major disasters declared
20 under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emer-
21 gency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.).

22 (b) MEMBERSHIP.—

23 (1) IN GENERAL.—The advisory panel convened
24 under subsection (a) shall consist of at least 2 rep-

1 representatives from national emergency management
2 organizations, at least 2 relevant county officials, at
3 least 1 representative from the National Weather
4 Service, and at least 5 representatives from each of
5 the 10 regions of the Federal Emergency Manage-
6 ment Agency selected from emergency management
7 personnel employed by State, local, territorial, or
8 Tribal authorities within each region.

9 (2) INCLUSION ON PANEL.—To the furthest ex-
10 tent practicable, representation on the advisory
11 panel shall include emergency management per-
12 sonnel from rural, urban, underrepresented, Tribal,
13 and insular jurisdictions and representatives of State
14 or local governments with responsibility for the fi-
15 nancial or budgetary impact of disasters.

16 (c) CONSIDERATIONS.—In reviewing the process and
17 procedures related to the determination of incident periods
18 under subsection (a), the advisory panel convened under
19 such subsection shall consider the effectiveness of incident
20 periods, including—

21 (1) incident periods for slow onset disasters;

22 (2) incident periods for correlated noncontig-
23 uous disasters;

24 (3) incident periods for compound disasters;

25 and

1 (4) incident periods for cascading disasters.

2 (d) INTERIM REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after
3 the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall
4 submit to Congress, and make publicly available, a report
5 regarding the findings of the review under this section
6 that includes any recommendations of the advisory panel
7 convened under subsection (a), including additional legis-
8 lation that may be necessary to address such findings.

9 (e) FINAL REPORT.—Not later than 2 years after the
10 date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall sub-
11 mit to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastruc-
12 ture of the House of Representatives and the Committee
13 on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the
14 Senate a report discussing—

15 (1) a summary of the findings of the advisory
16 panel convened under subsection (a);

17 (2) the implementation of recommendations
18 from such advisory panel; and

19 (3) any additional legislative recommendations
20 necessary to improve the effectiveness of incident pe-
21 riods.

22 (f) RULEMAKING.—Immediately following a 30-day
23 congressional review period of the report described in sub-
24 section (e), the Administrator shall begin a rulemaking to

1 issue such regulations as are necessary to implement the
2 recommendations of the advisory panel.

3 **SEC. 111. FIRE MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM POL-**
4 **ICY.**

5 Section 420(a) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Re-
6 lief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5187(a))
7 is amended—

8 (1) by striking the period at the end and insert-
9 ing “; and”;

10 (2) by striking “local government for the miti-
11 gation” and inserting the following: “local govern-
12 ment for—

13 “(1) the mitigation”; and

14 (3) by adding at the end the following:

15 “(2) assessments and emergency stabilization to
16 protect public safety irrespective of the incident pe-
17 riod for a declared fire.”.

18 **SEC. 112. INDIAN TRIBAL GOVERNMENT ELIGIBILITY.**

19 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 420 of the Robert T.
20 Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act
21 (42 U.S.C. 5187) is amended—

22 (1) in subsection (a), by inserting “, Indian
23 tribal government,” before “or local government”;

24 (2) by redesignating subsections (b) through (e)
25 as subsections (c) through (f), respectively;

1 (3) by inserting after subsection (a) the fol-
2 lowing:

3 “(b) PROCEDURE FOR REQUEST.—The Governor of
4 a State or the Chief Executive of an Indian tribal govern-
5 ment affected by a fire described in subsection (a) may
6 directly submit a request to authorize assistance under
7 this section.”; and

8 (4) by adding at the end the following:

9 “(g) SAVINGS PROVISION.—Nothing in this section
10 shall prohibit an Indian tribal government from receiving
11 assistance under this section pursuant to an authorization
12 made at the request of a State under subsection (b) if
13 assistance is not authorized under this section for the
14 same incident based on a request by the Indian tribal gov-
15 ernment under subsection (b).”.

16 (b) REGULATIONS.—

17 (1) UPDATE.—Not later than 1 year after the
18 date of enactment of this Act, the President shall
19 issue regulations updating part 204 of title 44, Code
20 of Federal Regulations, to carry out the amend-
21 ments made by subsection (a).

22 (2) CONTENTS.—In issuing the regulations re-
23 quired under paragraph (1), the President shall—

24 (A) authorize the Federal Emergency Man-
25 agement Agency to directly receive a request for

1 a fire management assistance declaration from
2 an Indian Tribal Government and directly pro-
3 vide related grants and resources to Indian
4 Tribal Governments;

5 (B) clarify that Indian Tribal Governments
6 for which the President does not grant a re-
7 quest described in subparagraph (A) remain eli-
8 gible to receive assistance under section 420 of
9 the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and
10 Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5187)
11 through assistance granted under a fire man-
12 agement assistance declaration made at the re-
13 quest of a State;

14 (C) consider the unique conditions that af-
15 fect the general welfare of Indian Tribal gov-
16 ernments; and

17 (D) enter into government-to-government
18 consultation with Indian Tribal Governments
19 regarding the regulations.

20 (3) FIRE MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE DECLARA-
21 TION DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term “fire
22 management assistance declaration” means a dec-
23 laration approved under section 204.21(a) of title
24 44, Code of Federal Regulations.

1 **SEC. 113. STRENGTHENING CLOSEOUTS FOR CRITICAL**
2 **SERVICES.**

3 Section 705 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief
4 and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5205) is
5 amended—

6 (1) by inserting “or owner or operator of a pri-
7 vate nonprofit facility” after “State or local govern-
8 ment” each place it appears;

9 (2) by inserting “or owner or operator of a pri-
10 vate nonprofit facility” after “Federal, State, or
11 local government” each place it appears; and

12 (3) by inserting “or owners or operators of pri-
13 vate nonprofit facilities” after “State, local, or In-
14 dian tribal governments”.

15 **SEC. 114. SHELTERING OF EMERGENCY RESPONSE PER-**
16 **SONNEL.**

17 Section 403 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief
18 and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170b) is
19 amended by adding at the end the following:

20 “(e) SHELTERING OF EMERGENCY RESPONSE PER-
21 SONNEL.—

22 “(1) IN GENERAL.—For any major disaster for
23 which the President has authorized emergency pro-
24 tective measures for an area within the jurisdiction
25 of a State, Indian tribal, or local government, the
26 Administrator may reimburse the State, Indian trib-

1 al, or local government for costs relating to shel-
2 tering emergency response personnel, including indi-
3 viduals that are a part of the same predisaster
4 household as such personnel, in exclusive-use con-
5 gregate or noncongregate settings if the Governor of
6 the State or chief executive of the Indian tribal or
7 local government determines that the damage or dis-
8 ruption to such area is of such a magnitude as to
9 disrupt the provision of emergency protective meas-
10 ures within such area.

11 “(2) LIMITATION OF ASSISTANCE.—

12 “(A) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator
13 may only reimburse a State, Indian tribal, or
14 local government for the costs of sheltering
15 emergency response personnel under paragraph
16 (1) for such a period of time as the Adminis-
17 trator determines reasonable based in the indi-
18 vidual characteristics of and impacts to the af-
19 fected area, including the extent of damage, the
20 availability of alternative housing options, the
21 availability of utilities, and disruptions to trans-
22 portation infrastructure.

23 “(B) MAXIMUM DURATION OF REIMBURSE-
24 MENT.—The period of reimbursement under
25 subparagraph (A) may not exceed the 6-month

1 period beginning on the date on which the inci-
2 dent period ends.

3 “(3) DEFINITION OF EMERGENCY RESPONSE
4 PERSONNEL.—In this subsection, the term ‘emer-
5 gency response personnel’ means—

6 “(A) employees or contracted employees
7 providing law enforcement, fire suppression,
8 rescue, emergency medical, emergency manage-
9 ment, or emergency communications services;
10 and

11 “(B) elected officials, except Members of
12 Congress, responsible for the overseeing or di-
13 recting emergency response operations or recov-
14 ery activities.”.

15 **SEC. 115. EMERGENCY PROTECTIVE MEASURES TO FIGHT**
16 **FLOODING DAMAGE.**

17 Section 403 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief
18 and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170b) is fur-
19 ther amended by adding at the end the following:

20 “(f) FURTHER EMERGENCY PROTECTIVE MEAS-
21 URES.—

22 “(1) IN GENERAL.—In cases in which an owner
23 or operator of a stormwater pumping station en-
24 gages in flood fighting activities during emergency
25 protective measures or emergency work authorized

1 by this section, the President shall reimburse such
2 owner or operator in accordance with applicable
3 equipment rates regardless of whether or not such
4 pumping stations contain temporary or permanently
5 mounted or affixed equipment.

6 “(2) FLOOD FIGHTING ACTIVITIES DEFINED.—
7 In this subsection, the term ‘flood fighting activities’
8 includes dewatering behind a levee by breaching or
9 pumping.”.

10 **SEC. 116. FAIRNESS AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN APPEALS.**

11 Section 423 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief
12 and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5189a) is
13 amended by adding at the end the following:

14 “(e) ATTORNEY’S FEES.—In cases in which the
15 Board decides in favor of the applicant or otherwise con-
16 cludes there is an error on the part of the Administrator
17 in denial of assistance, the Administrator shall reimburse
18 the applicant for attorney’s fees.”.

19 **SEC. 117. EXPEDITED FUNDING FOR EMERGENCY WORK.**

20 Section 403 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief
21 and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170b) is
22 amending by adding at the end the following:

23 “(e) DISBURSEMENT.—Reimbursements provided
24 under this section shall be disbursed to the applicant not
25 later than 120 days after the applicant submits a request

1 for reimbursement if the President determines at least 90
2 percent of estimated costs are eligible for such reimburse-
3 ment.”.

4 **SEC. 118. CONSISTENCY IN PROCUREMENT PRACTICES.**

5 For the purposes of applying the procurement stand-
6 ards under part 200 of title 2, Code of Federal Regula-
7 tions to assistance provided under the Robert T. Stafford
8 Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C.
9 5121 et seq.), local governments shall be treated as a
10 State or Tribal government under section 200.317 of title
11 2, Code of Federal Regulations.

12 **TITLE II—INDIVIDUAL**
13 **ASSISTANCE REFORMS**

14 **SEC. 201. INFORMATION SHARING FOR FEDERAL AGEN-**
15 **CIES.**

16 (a) ESTABLISHMENT OF UNIFIED DISASTER APPLI-
17 CATION SYSTEM.—

18 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the
19 Federal Emergency Management Agency shall estab-
20 lish and maintain a web-based interagency electronic
21 information sharing system, to be known as the
22 “unified disaster application system”, to—

23 (A) facilitate the administration of the uni-
24 versal application for direct Federal disaster as-
25 sistance established under section 202;

1 (B) carry out the purposes of disaster as-
2 sistance programs swiftly, efficiently, and in ac-
3 cordance with applicable laws, regulations, and
4 the privacy and data protections provided under
5 this section; and

6 (C) support the detection, prevention, and
7 investigation of waste, fraud, abuse, or discrimi-
8 nation in the administration of disaster assist-
9 ance programs.

10 (2) AUTHORITIES OF ADMINISTRATOR.—In es-
11 tablishing and maintaining the unified disaster ap-
12 plication system under this subsection, the Adminis-
13 trator may collect and maintain disaster assistance
14 information received from a disaster assistance
15 agency, a block grant recipient, or an applicant for
16 a disaster assistance program and share such infor-
17 mation with any other disaster assistance agency or
18 block grant recipient using such system.

19 (3) REQUIREMENTS.—The Administrator shall
20 ensure that the unified disaster application system
21 established and maintained under this subsection—

22 (A) allows an applicant to receive status
23 updates on an application for disaster assist-
24 ance programs submitted through such system;

1 (B) allows for applicants to update disaster
2 assistance information throughout the recovery
3 journeys of such applicants in accordance with
4 established application timeframes;

5 (C) allows for the distribution to applicants
6 of information about additional recovery re-
7 sources that may be available in a disaster
8 stricken area;

9 (D) provides an applicant with information
10 and documentation relating to an application
11 for a disaster assistance program submitted by
12 such applicant; and

13 (E) contains any other capabilities deter-
14 mined necessary by the head of a disaster as-
15 sistance agency.

16 (b) DATA SECURITY.—The Administrator may facili-
17 tate the collection of disaster assistance information into
18 the unified disaster application system established under
19 subsection (a) only after the following requirements have
20 been met:

21 (1) The Administrator certifies that the unified
22 disaster application system substantially complies
23 with the data security standards and best practices
24 established pursuant to subchapter II of chapter 35

1 of title 44, United States Code, and any other appli-
2 cable Federal information security policy.

3 (2) The Administrator publishes a privacy im-
4 pact assessment for the unified disaster application
5 system, in accordance with section 208(b)(1)(B) of
6 the E-Government Act of 2002 (44 U.S.C. 3501
7 note).

8 (3) The Administrator, after consulting with
9 disaster assistance agencies, publishes standard
10 rules of behavior for disaster assistance agencies,
11 block grant recipients, and personnel granted access
12 to disaster assistance information to protect such in-
13 formation from improper disclosure.

14 (c) COLLECTION AND SHARING OF ADDITIONAL
15 RECORDS AND INFORMATION.—

16 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator may au-
17 thorize the additional collection, maintenance, shar-
18 ing, and use of disaster assistance information by
19 publishing a notice on the unified disaster applica-
20 tion system established under subsection (a) that in-
21 cludes a detailed description of—

22 (A) the specific amendments to the collec-
23 tion, maintenance, and sharing of disaster as-
24 sistance information authorized;

1 (B) why each such amendment to how dis-
2 aster assistance information is collected, main-
3 tained, or shared is necessary to carry out the
4 purposes of a disaster assistance program and
5 consistent with the fair information practice
6 principles; and

7 (C) the disaster assistance agencies and
8 block grant recipients that will be granted ac-
9 cess to the additional information to carry out
10 the purposes of any disaster assistance pro-
11 gram.

12 (2) NOTICE AND PUBLICATION REQUIRE-
13 MENTS.—The publication of a notice under para-
14 graph (1) of a revision to the unified disaster appli-
15 cation system of records prior to any new collection,
16 or uses, of Privacy Act categories of records, to
17 carry out the purposes of a disaster assistance pro-
18 gram with regard to a disaster declared by the
19 President under section 401 or 501 of the Robert T.
20 Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance
21 Act (42 U.S.C. 5170; 5191), shall be deemed to sat-
22 isfy the notice and publication requirements of sec-
23 tion 552a(e)(4) of title 5, United States Code, for
24 the entire period of performance for any assistance
25 provided under a disaster assistance program.

1 (3) WAIVER OF INFORMATION COLLECTION RE-
2 QUIREMENTS.—

3 (A) IN GENERAL.—Upon the declaration of
4 a major disaster or emergency pursuant to sec-
5 tions 401 or 501 of the Robert T. Stafford Dis-
6 aster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42
7 U.S.C. 5170; 5191) by the President, the Ad-
8 ministrators may waive the requirements of sub-
9 chapter I of chapter 35 of title 44, United
10 States Code, with respect to voluntary collection
11 of information for the entire period of perform-
12 ance for any assistance provided under a dis-
13 aster assistance program.

14 (B) TRANSPARENCY.—Upon exercising the
15 waiver authority under subparagraph (A), the
16 Administrator shall—

17 (i) promptly post on a website of the
18 Federal Emergency Management Agency a
19 brief justification for such waiver, the an-
20 ticipated period of time such waiver will be
21 in effect, and the disaster assistance offices
22 within the Federal Emergency Manage-
23 ment Agency to which such waiver shall
24 apply; and

1 (ii) update the information relating to
2 such waiver, as applicable.

3 (4) GAO REVIEW OF WAIVER OF INFORMATION
4 COLLECTION REQUIREMENTS.—

5 (A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year
6 after the date of enactment of this Act, the
7 Comptroller General of the United States shall
8 issue a report describing the benefits and poten-
9 tial risks associated with authorizing the waiver
10 of the information collection requirements de-
11 scribed in paragraph (3).

12 (B) CONTENTS.—The report required
13 under subparagraph (A) shall include an assess-
14 ment of the extent to which a waiver described
15 in paragraph (3) would—

16 (i) affect the paperwork burden for in-
17 dividuals, small businesses, State, local,
18 and Tribal governments, and other per-
19 sons;

20 (ii) affect the consistent application of
21 Federal laws relating to—

22 (I) privacy and confidentiality;
23 (II) security of information; and
24 (III) access to information; and

1 (iii) encourage or deter a State or
2 other entity from participating in the vol-
3 untary collection of information for the du-
4 ration of a major disaster or emergency.

5 (d) USE BY OTHER FEDERAL AGENCIES.—

6 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator may per-
7 mit a Federal agency other than a disaster assist-
8 ance agency listed in subparagraphs (A) through
9 (D) of subsection (f)(3) to use the unified disaster
10 application system established under subsection (a)
11 for the purpose of facilitating disaster-related assist-
12 ance if such agency enters into an agreement con-
13 taining the terms described in paragraph (2).

14 (2) AGENCY AGREEMENT.—An agreement en-
15 tered into under paragraph (1) shall contain the fol-
16 lowing terms:

17 (A) The Federal agency shall—

18 (i) collect, share, maintain, and use
19 disaster assistance information in compli-
20 ance with this section and any policies of
21 the Federal Emergency Management
22 Agency and any information protection and
23 use policies of such Federal agency; and

24 (ii) train any personnel granted access
25 to disaster assistance information on the

1 rules of behavior established by the Admin-
2 istrator under subsection (b)(3).

3 (B) In the event of any unauthorized dis-
4 closure of disaster assistance information, the
5 Federal agency shall—

6 (i) notify the Administrator within 24
7 hours of discovering any such unauthorized
8 disclosure;

9 (ii) cooperate fully with the Adminis-
10 trator in the investigation and remediation
11 of any such disclosure;

12 (iii) cooperate fully in the prosecution
13 of a person responsible for such disclosure;
14 and

15 (iv) assume the responsibility for any
16 compensation, civil liability, or other reme-
17 diation measures, whether awarded by a
18 judgment of a court or agreed as a com-
19 promise of any potential claims by or on
20 behalf of an applicant, including by obtain-
21 ing credit monitoring and remediation
22 services, for an improper disclosure that
23 is—

24 (I) caused, directly or indirectly,
25 by the acts or omissions of officers,

1 employees, and contractors of the
2 agency; or

3 (II) from any electronic system
4 of records that is created or main-
5 tained by the agency pursuant to sec-
6 tion 552a(e) of title 5, United States
7 Code.

8 (3) PUBLICATION OF AGENCY AGREEMENT.—

9 The Administrator shall publish an agency agree-
10 ment entered into under this subsection on the same
11 website as the unified disaster application system es-
12 tablished under subsection (a).

13 (e) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—The sharing and use
14 of disaster assistance information that is subject to the
15 requirements of section 552a of title 5, United States
16 Code, by disaster assistance agencies and block grant re-
17 cipients—

18 (1) shall not be—

19 (A) construed as a matching program for
20 purposes of section 552a(a)(8) of such title; or

21 (B) subject to the remaining computer
22 matching provisions of section 552a of such
23 title; and

24 (2) shall be in addition to any other law pro-
25 viding for the sharing or use of such information.

1 (f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

2 (1) APPLICANT.—The term “applicant”
3 means—

4 (A) a person who applies for disaster as-
5 sistance from a disaster assistance program;
6 and

7 (B) a person on whose behalf a person de-
8 scribed in subparagraph (A) has applied for dis-
9 aster assistance.

10 (2) BLOCK GRANT RECIPIENT.—The term
11 “block grant recipient” means a State, local govern-
12 ment, or Tribal government that receives assistance
13 through the disaster assistance program described in
14 paragraph (5)(B)(i).

15 (3) DISASTER ASSISTANCE AGENCY.—The term
16 “disaster assistance agency” means—

17 (A) the Federal Emergency Management
18 Agency;

19 (B) the Department of Housing and
20 Urban Development;

21 (C) the Small Business Administration;

22 (D) the Department of Agriculture; and

23 (E) any other Federal agency that the Ad-
24 ministrator permits to use the unified disaster
25 application system under subsection (d).

1 (4) DISASTER ASSISTANCE INFORMATION.—The
2 term “disaster assistance information” includes any
3 personal, demographic, biographical, geographical,
4 financial information, or other information that a
5 disaster assistance agency or block grant recipient is
6 authorized to collect, maintain, share, or use to pro-
7 cess an application for disaster assistance or other-
8 wise carry out a disaster assistance program.

9 (5) DISASTER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.—The
10 term “disaster assistance program” means—

11 (A) any program that provides assistance
12 to individuals and households under title IV or
13 title V of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief
14 and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170
15 et seq.); or

16 (B) any other assistance program carried
17 out by a disaster assistance agency that pro-
18 vides assistance to an individual, household, or
19 organization related to a major disaster or
20 emergency declared under section 401 or 501 of
21 such Act, including—

22 (i) assistance for activities related to
23 disaster relief, long-term recovery, restora-
24 tion of infrastructure and housing, eco-
25 nomic revitalization, and mitigation that

1 are authorized under title I of the Housing
2 and Community Development Act of 1974
3 (42 U.S.C. 5301 et seq.);

4 (ii) any loan that is authorized under
5 section 7(b) of the Small Business Act (15
6 U.S.C. 636(b)); and

7 (iii) the distribution of food benefit al-
8 lotments as authorized under section 412
9 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief
10 and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C.
11 5179) and section 5(h) of the Food Stamp
12 Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 2014(h)).

13 **SEC. 202. UNIVERSAL APPLICATION FOR INDIVIDUAL AS-**
14 **SISTANCE.**

15 (a) **UNIVERSAL APPLICATION.**—The Administrator
16 of the Federal Emergency Management Agency shall de-
17 velop and establish a universal application for direct Fed-
18 eral disaster assistance for individuals in areas impacted
19 by emergencies or disasters.

20 (b) **CONSULTATION AND SUPPORT.**—

21 (1) **CONSULTATION.**—In carrying out this sec-
22 tion, the Administrator shall consult with the fol-
23 lowing:

24 (A) The Director of the Office of Manage-
25 ment and Budget.

1 (B) The Administrator of the Small Busi-
2 ness Administration.

3 (C) The Secretary of Housing and Urban
4 Development.

5 (D) The Secretary of Agriculture.

6 (2) SUPPORT.—The entities described in para-
7 graph (1) shall provide prompt support to the Ad-
8 ministrator of the Federal Emergency Management
9 Agency.

10 (c) SURVEY.—The application established under sub-
11 section (a) shall include a voluntary survey to collect the
12 demographic data of an applicant.

13 **SEC. 203. CLARIFYING DUPLICATION OF BENEFITS.**

14 (a) AUTHORITY.—Paragraph (4) of section 312(b) of
15 the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency As-
16 sistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5155(b)(4)), as in effect on the
17 day after the date of enactment of the FAA Reauthoriza-
18 tion Act of 2018 (Public Law 115–254)—

19 (1) is restored and revived; and

20 (2) is amended by adding at the end the fol-
21 lowing:

22 “(D) PROHIBITION ON INCOME THRESH-
23 OLD.—In carrying out this paragraph, no in-
24 come threshold may be applied to limit the eli-

1 gibility of a recipient from qualifying for a
2 waiver under this paragraph.

3 “(E) APPLICABILITY.—This paragraph
4 shall apply to any major disaster or emergency
5 declared by the President under section 401 or
6 501, respectively, on or after January 1,
7 2016.”.

8 (b) STATUTORY CONSTRUCTION.—Section 312(b)(4)
9 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency
10 Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5155(b)(4)), as restored and
11 revived by subsection (a), shall not be construed to apply
12 to section 406, 408, or 409 of such Act (42 U.S.C. 5172,
13 5174).

14 (c) FURTHER AMENDMENT.—Section 312(a) of the
15 Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assist-
16 ance Act (42 U.S.C. 5155(a)) is amended by striking “or
17 any other source”.

18 **SEC. 204. CRISIS COUNSELING AND ADDICTION IN DISAS-**
19 **TERS.**

20 (a) CRISIS COUNSELING ASSISTANCE AND TRAIN-
21 ING.—Section 416 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Re-
22 lief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5183) is
23 amended—

24 (1) in subsection (a)—

1 (A) by inserting “, substance use, or alco-
2 hol use” after “private mental health”; and

3 (B) by inserting “, substance use, and al-
4 cohol use” after “relieve mental health”; and

5 (2) in subsection (b) by inserting “, substance
6 use, or alcohol use” before “organization providing”.

7 (b) REPORT ON CHANGES TO APPLICATION.—Not
8 later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this
9 Act, the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Manage-
10 ment Agency, in consultation with the Assistant Secretary
11 for Mental Health and Substance Use, the Director for
12 the Center for Substance Abuse Treatment, and State al-
13 cohol and drug agencies, shall review, adjust, and report
14 to Congress any changes made to the application for as-
15 sistance under section 416 of the Robert T. Stafford Dis-
16 aster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C.
17 5183) and to any other relevant guidance documents to
18 reflect the amendments made by this section.

19 (c) GAO REPORT TO CONGRESS.—The Comptroller
20 General of the United States shall conduct a review of the
21 assistance provided under the crisis counseling assistance
22 and training program established pursuant to section 416
23 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency
24 Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5183) and submit to Congress
25 a report describing—

1 (1) the duration of assistance provided to indi-
2 viduals under such program; and

3 (2) the compliance of the Administrator of the
4 Federal Emergency Management Agency with the
5 requirement that such assistance may only be used
6 for mental health, substance use, and alcohol use
7 problems caused or aggravated by a major disaster
8 or its aftermath.

9 (d) MANAGEMENT COSTS.—Section 324(b)(2) of the
10 Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assist-
11 ance Act (42 U.S.C. 5165b(b)(2)) is further amended by
12 adding at the end the following:

13 “(C) INDIVIDUAL ASSISTANCE.—A grantee
14 under section 408(f) may be reimbursed not
15 more than 12 percent of the total award
16 amount under each such section.

17 “(D) CRISIS COUNSELING ASSISTANCE,
18 TRAINING, AND CASE MANAGEMENT SERV-
19 ICES.—A grantee and subgrantee, cumulatively,
20 may be reimbursed not more than 15 percent of
21 the total amount of the grant award under ei-
22 ther section 416 or 426.”.

23 (e) ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS.—Section 408(f)(1) of
24 the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency As-
25 sistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5174), is amended—

1 (1) by striking “(A) GRANT TO STATE.—” and
2 all that follows through “subsection (g),” and insert-
3 ing “Subject to subsection (g)”; and

4 (2) by striking subparagraph (B).

5 **SEC. 205. REPAIR AND REBUILDING.**

6 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 408(b)(1) of the Robert
7 T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act
8 (42 U.S.C. 5174(b)(1)) is amended—

9 (1) by striking “rendered uninhabitable” and
10 inserting “damaged by a major disaster”; and

11 (2) by striking “uninhabitable, as a result of
12 damage caused by a major disaster” and inserting
13 “damaged by a major disaster”.

14 (b) HAZARD MITIGATION.—Section 408 of the Rob-
15 ert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance
16 Act (42 U.S.C. 5174) is amended—

17 (1) in subsection (c) by adding at the end the
18 following:

19 “(5) HAZARD MITIGATION.—

20 “(A) IN GENERAL.—The President may
21 provide financial assistance to individuals and
22 households whose primary residence, utilities, or
23 residential infrastructure are damaged by a
24 major disaster, for cost-effective hazard mitiga-
25 tion measures that reduce threats to life and

1 property, or future damage to such residence,
2 utilities, or infrastructure in future disasters.

3 “(B) RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER ASSIST-
4 ANCE.—A recipient of assistance provided
5 under this paragraph shall not be required to
6 show that the assistance can be met through
7 other means, except insurance proceeds.”; and
8 (2) in subsection (h)—

9 (A) in paragraph (1) by inserting “, finan-
10 cial assistance for hazard mitigation under sub-
11 section (c)(5)(A),” after “subsection
12 (c)(1)(A)(i)”;

13 (B) in paragraph (3) by striking “para-
14 graphs (1) and (2)” and inserting “paragraphs
15 (1), (2), and (3)”;

16 (C) by adding at the end the following:

17 “(5) HAZARD MITIGATION.—The maximum fi-
18 nancial assistance any individual or household may
19 receive under subsection (c)(5) shall be equivalent to
20 the amount set forth in paragraph (1) with respect
21 to a single major disaster.”.

22 **SEC. 206. FEMA EMERGENCY HOME REPAIR PROGRAM.**

23 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 403(a) of the Robert T.
24 Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act
25 (42 U.S.C. 5170b(a)) is amended—

1 (1) in paragraph (3)—

2 (A) in subparagraph (I) by striking “and”
3 at the end;

4 (B) in subparagraph (J) by striking the
5 period and inserting “; and”; and

6 (C) by adding at the end the following:

7 “(K) minor repairs up to habitability of
8 owner-occupied homes damaged by the disaster
9 in order for survivors to safely shelter in place,
10 subject to the availability of appropriations.”;
11 and

12 (2) by adding at the end the following:

13 “(5) SHELTERING AND HOUSING OPTIONS.—
14 Not later than 15 days after a declaration of a
15 major disaster, the Federal coordinating officer shall
16 identify all sheltering and housing options available
17 under this section or section 408 to a State Gov-
18 ernor, or the designated State coordinating officer.

19 “(6) DEFINITION OF MINOR REPAIRS UP TO
20 HABITABILITY.—In this subsection, the term ‘minor
21 repairs up to habitability’ means the minimum
22 standards for permanent housing described in sec-
23 tion 576.403(c) of title 24, Code of Federal Regula-
24 tions (or successor regulations).”.

1 (b) RULEMAKING.—Not later than 2 years after the
2 date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the
3 Federal Emergency Management Agency shall issue final
4 regulations to implement the amendments made by this
5 section.

6 **SEC. 207. DIRECT ASSISTANCE.**

7 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 408(c) of the Robert T.
8 Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act
9 (42 U.S.C. 5174(c)) is further amended by striking para-
10 graph (2) and inserting the following:

11 “(2) REPAIRS.—

12 “(A) FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR RE-
13 PAIRS.—The President may provide financial
14 assistance for the repair of owner-occupied pri-
15 vate residences, utilities, and residential infra-
16 structure (such as a private access route) dam-
17 aged by a major disaster, or with respect to in-
18 dividuals with disabilities, rendered inaccessible
19 by a major disaster.

20 “(B) DIRECT ASSISTANCE FOR REPAIRS.—

21 “(i) IN GENERAL.—The President
22 may provide direct assistance to individuals
23 and households who are unable to make
24 use of financial assistance under subpara-

1 graph (A) and when there is a lack of
2 available resources, for—

3 “(I) the repair of owner-occupied
4 private residences, utilities, and resi-
5 dential infrastructure (such as a pri-
6 vate access route) damaged by a
7 major disaster, or with respect to indi-
8 viduals with disabilities, rendered in-
9 accessible by a disaster; and

10 “(II) eligible hazard mitigation
11 measures that reduce the likelihood
12 and future damage to such residences,
13 utilities, and infrastructure.

14 “(ii) ELIGIBILITY.—A recipient of as-
15 sistance under this subparagraph shall not
16 be eligible for assistance under paragraph
17 (1), unless otherwise determined by the
18 Administrator.

19 “(C) RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER ASSIST-
20 ANCE.—A recipient of assistance provided
21 under this paragraph shall not be required to
22 show that the assistance can be met through
23 other means, except insurance proceeds.”.

1 (b) STATE ROLE.—Section 408(f) of the Robert T.
2 Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act
3 (42 U.S.C. 5174(f)) is further amended—

4 (1) by striking “subsections (c)(1)(B), (c)(4),
5 and (e)” each place it appears and inserting “para-
6 graphs (1)(B), (2)(B), and (4) of subsection (c) and
7 subsection (e)”;

8 (2) in paragraph (3)(A) by striking “subsection
9 (c)(1)(B), (c)(4), or (e)” and inserting “paragraph
10 (1)(B), (2)(B), or (4) of subsection (c) or subsection
11 (e)”.

12 **SEC. 208. ACCURATE INFORMATION TO DISASTER VICTIMS.**

13 The Administrator of the Federal Emergency Man-
14 agement Agency shall issue such regulations as are nec-
15 essary to ensure that an applicant for assistance under
16 section 408 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and
17 Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5174) that has indi-
18 cated ownership of an insurance policy for a home or facil-
19 ity damaged by a major disaster declared under section
20 401 of such Act that is owned by such applicant does not
21 receive a notice that indicates a denial of assistance before
22 a final determination has been made regarding the ap-
23 proval or denial of a claim under such policy.

1 **SEC. 209. IMPROVED NOTICES FOR FEMA ASSISTANCE.**

2 (a) PERIOD OF ASSISTANCE.—Clauses (iii) and (iv)
3 of section 408(c)(1)(B) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster
4 Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C.
5 5174(c)(1)(B)) are amended by striking “18-month pe-
6 riod” and inserting “24-month period”.

7 (b) APPEALS.—The Administrator of the Federal
8 Emergency Management Agency shall revise section
9 206.115 of title 44, Code of Federal Regulations, to re-
10 quire the Federal Emergency Management Agency to pro-
11 vide to any applicant who appeals a determination of eligi-
12 bility of assistance—

13 (1) any documentation used to make such de-
14 termination, including any inspection documents
15 that exist;

16 (2) a description of—

17 (A) the reasons for such determination;
18 and

19 (B) recommended steps that could be
20 taken to remedy a determination of ineligibility,
21 including, as applicable, a list of additional doc-
22 umentation that the applicant may provide; and

23 (3) any inspection documents that exist not
24 later than 10 days after the completion of the in-
25 spection.

1 (c) APPLICABILITY.—This section and the amend-
2 ment made by this section shall apply to funds appro-
3 priated on or after the date of enactment of this Act.

4 **SEC. 210. COMMON SENSE DISPLACEMENT ASSISTANCE**
5 **FOR DISASTER VICTIMS.**

6 Section 408 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief
7 and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5174) is
8 amended by adding at the end the following:

9 “(k) DUPLICATION OF BENEFITS.—

10 “(1) IN GENERAL.—In determining eligibility
11 for displacement assistance under this section, the
12 President may not consider insurance a duplication
13 of benefits for the purpose of applying section 312
14 of this Act.

15 “(2) DISPLACEMENT ASSISTANCE DEFINED.—

16 In this section, the term ‘displacement assistance’
17 means assistance provided under this section for
18 food, water, first aid, personal hygiene items, baby
19 formula, breast-feeding supplies, fuel for transpor-
20 tation, emergency supplies and to stay in a hotel or
21 motel, stay with family and friends, or for any other
22 available housing options.”.

1 **SEC. 211. STATE-MANAGED HOUSING AUTHORITY.**

2 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 408 of the Robert T.
3 Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act
4 (42 U.S.C. 5174) is amended—

5 (1) in subsection (f)(3)—

6 (A) in subparagraph (A)—

7 (i) by striking “A State” and insert-
8 ing the following:

9 “(i) IN GENERAL.—A State”; and

10 (ii) by adding at the end the fol-
11 lowing:

12 “(ii) TRANSPARENCY.—The President
13 shall make public the criteria used to
14 evaluate applications under clause (i) and
15 determine if a State or Indian tribal gov-
16 ernment meets the criteria described in
17 subparagraph (B) to administer grants de-
18 scribed in paragraph (1)(A).”;

19 (B) in subparagraph (C)(ii)—

20 (i) in subclause (I) by striking “;
21 and” and inserting a semicolon;

22 (ii) in subclause (II) by striking the
23 period at the end and inserting a semi-
24 colon; and

25 (iii) by adding at the end the fol-
26 lowing:

1 “(III) outline the approach of the
2 State to help disaster survivors create
3 a permanent housing plan; and

4 “(IV) outline the approach of the
5 State to provide individual disaster
6 survivors some choice of communities
7 and properties, as practicable.”;

8 (C) by striking subparagraph (F);

9 (D) by redesignating subparagraphs (G),
10 (H), (I), and (J) as subparagraphs (F), (G),
11 (H), and (I), respectively; and

12 (E) in subparagraph (I), as so redesign-
13 nated—

14 (i) in clause (ii) by striking “Not later
15 than 2 years after the date of enactment
16 of this paragraph, the” and inserting
17 “The”; and

18 (ii) in clause (iii) by striking “2
19 years” and inserting “10 years”; and

20 (2) in subsection (g)—

21 (A) in paragraph (1) by striking “para-
22 graph (2)” and inserting “paragraphs (2) and
23 (3)”; and

24 (B) by adding at the end the following:

1 “(3) DISASTER ASSISTANCE.—In the case of as-
 2 sistance provided under subsections (c)(1)(B),
 3 (c)(2)(B), and (c)(4), the Federal share shall be not
 4 less than 75 percent.”.

5 (b) GAO ASSESSMENT.—Upon the expiration of the
 6 authority to carry out section 408(f) of the Robert T.
 7 Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act
 8 (42 U.S.C. 5174(f)) as a pilot program, the Comptroller
 9 General of the United States shall issue a report on the
 10 effectiveness, successes, and challenges of any pilot pro-
 11 gram carried out pursuant to such section and make rec-
 12 ommendations on how to improve the provision of assist-
 13 ance under such section.

14 **SEC. 212. IMPROVED RENTAL ASSISTANCE.**

15 Section 408(c)(1)(A)(ii) of the Robert T. Stafford
 16 Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C.
 17 5174(c)(1)(A)(ii)) is amended by inserting “, including
 18 local postdisaster rent increases,” after “accommodation
 19 provided”.

20 **SEC. 213. ONLINE GUIDES FOR POSTDISASTER ASSIST-**
 21 **ANCE.**

22 (a) USE OF SERVICES OF OTHER AGENCIES.—Sec-
 23 tion 201(a) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and
 24 Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5131(a)) is amend-
 25 ed—

1 (1) in paragraph (7) by striking the period at
2 the end and inserting “; and”; and

3 (2) by adding at the end the following:

4 “(8) postdisaster assistance.”.

5 (b) GRANTS FOR ONLINE GUIDES FOR ASSIST-
6 ANCE.—Section 201 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster
7 Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5131)
8 is amended by adding at the end the following:

9 “(e) FUNDING FOR ONLINE GUIDES FOR ASSIST-
10 ANCE.—

11 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the
12 Federal Emergency Management Agency may pro-
13 vide funding to a State agency established under
14 subsection (c) to establish, update, or operate a
15 website to provide information relating to
16 postdisaster recovery funding and resources to a
17 community or an individual impacted by a major
18 disaster or emergency.

19 “(2) MANAGEMENT.—A website created under
20 this subsection shall be—

21 “(A) managed by the State agency; and

22 “(B) suitable for the residents of the State
23 of the State agency.

24 “(3) CONTENT.—The Administrator may pro-
25 vide funding to a State agency under this subsection

1 to establish a website that contains only 1 or more
2 of the following:

3 “(A) A list of Federal, State, and local
4 sources of postdisaster recovery funding or as-
5 sistance that may be available to a community
6 after a major disaster or emergency.

7 “(B) A list of Federal, State, and local
8 sources of postdisaster recovery funding or as-
9 sistance that may be available to an individual
10 impacted by a major disaster or emergency.

11 “(C) A technical guide that lists and ex-
12 plains the costs and benefits of alternatives
13 available to a community to mitigate the im-
14 pacts of a major disaster or emergency and pre-
15 pare for sequential hazards such as flooding
16 after a wildfire.

17 “(4) COOPERATION.—A State agency that re-
18 ceives funding under this subsection shall cooperate
19 with the Secretary of the Interior, the Secretary of
20 Agriculture, the Secretary of Housing and Urban
21 Development, the Administrator of the Small Busi-
22 ness Administration, and the Administrator of the
23 Federal Emergency Management Agency in devel-
24 oping a website under this subsection.

1 “(5) UPDATES.—A State agency that receives
2 funding to establish a website under this subsection
3 shall update the website not less than once every 6
4 months.”.

5 **SEC. 214. CLARIFYING SHELTERING ASSISTANCE ELIGI-**
6 **BILITY.**

7 (a) SECTION 403.—Section 403 of the Robert T.
8 Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act
9 (42 U.S.C. 5170b) is amended by adding at the end the
10 following:

11 “(e) CLARIFICATION OF SHELTERING ASSISTANCE
12 ELIGIBILITY.—The Administrator shall not consider the
13 absence of a fixed, physical address as a disqualifying fac-
14 tor for individuals or households applying for non-con-
15 gregate sheltering assistance under this section, as long
16 as the individual or household applying for such assistance
17 can demonstrate, through alternative means as determined
18 by the Administrator, that such individual or household
19 was residing within the disaster-affected area at the time
20 of the disaster for which assistance is being applied for
21 through means, including shelter records or an affidavit.”.

22 (b) SECTION 408.—Section 408(c)(1) of the Robert
23 T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act
24 (42 U.S.C. 5174) is amended by adding at the end the
25 following:

1 “(C) CLARIFICATION OF SHELTERING AS-
2 SISTANCE ELIGIBILITY.—The Administrator
3 shall not consider the absence of a fixed, phys-
4 ical address as a disqualifying factor for indi-
5 viduals or households applying for assistance
6 under this section, as long as the individual or
7 household applying for such assistance can
8 demonstrate, through alternative means as de-
9 termined by the Administrator, that such indi-
10 vidual or household was residing within the dis-
11 aster-affected area at the time of the disaster
12 for which assistance is being applied for
13 through means, including shelter records or an
14 affidavit.”.

15 **SEC. 215. ACCESS TO LIFESAVING NON-CONGREGATE SHEL-**
16 **TERING.**

17 The Administrator of the Federal Emergency Man-
18 agement Agency shall ensure individuals and households
19 that qualify for non-congregate sheltering assistance
20 under section 403 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Re-
21 lief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170b) are
22 not required to provide a credit card or security deposit
23 to access such sheltering assistance.

1 **SEC. 216. ASSISTANCE FOR TOTAL LOSS.**

2 Section 408(c)(3) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster
3 Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C.
4 5174(c)(3)) is amended—

5 (1) by redesignating subparagraph (B) as sub-
6 paragraph (C); and

7 (2) by inserting after subparagraph (A) the fol-
8 lowing:

9 “(B) TOTAL LOSS.—

10 “(i) IN GENERAL.—In the case of a
11 total loss of an owner occupied residence,
12 subject to section 312, and notwith-
13 standing subsection (h) of such section, if
14 the cost of direct assistance under para-
15 graph (1)(B) exceeds the cost of replace-
16 ment of such residence, the President may
17 offer financial assistance for replacement
18 of such residence.

19 “(ii) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—In any
20 case in which the President is authorized
21 under clause (i) to provide financial assist-
22 ance for replacement but does not offer
23 such assistance, the President shall provide
24 to Congress a report explaining the ration-
25 ale for the decision not to provide such as-
26 sistance.”.

1 **TITLE III—MITIGATION**
2 **REFORMS**

3 **SEC. 301. PREAPPROVED PROJECT MITIGATION PLANS.**

4 Section 322 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief
5 and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5165) is
6 amended by adding at the end the following:

7 “(f) PREAPPROVED PROJECT MITIGATION PLANS.—

8 “(1) IN GENERAL.—To be eligible to carry out
9 projects pursuant to the requirements of this sub-
10 section, a State or Indian tribal government shall, in
11 consultation with appropriately licensed professionals
12 (as such term is defined in section 409(b)(5)), de-
13 velop and submit to the President a preapproved
14 project mitigation plan.

15 “(2) SUBMISSION REQUIREMENT.—If a State or
16 Indian tribal government does not submit a plan
17 under paragraph (1) not later than 3 years after the
18 date of enactment of the FEMA Act of 2025, the
19 State or Indian tribal government shall not be eligi-
20 ble for an increased Federal share under subsection
21 (c)(3) of section 409 for any assistance provided
22 under such section.

23 “(3) CONTENTS.—A preapproved mitigation
24 plan described in paragraph (1) shall include—

1 “(A) a list of projects designed to mitigate
2 damage caused by natural disasters that may
3 occur in such State or the jurisdiction of the
4 Indian tribal government, as applicable;

5 “(B) with respect to a State—

6 “(i) not fewer than 1 project for each
7 county or county equivalent in the State;
8 or

9 “(ii) a written description explaining
10 why a county or county equivalent does not
11 have a proposed project under the plan;

12 “(C) a detailed description of each project
13 and the benefits of such project; and

14 “(D) an estimated cost for each project.

15 “(4) ELIGIBLE PROJECTS.—A project is eligible
16 to be included in a preapproved project mitigation
17 plan described in paragraph (1) if such project is eli-
18 gible for assistance under section 203, 205, or 404.

19 “(5) PEER REVIEW OF GRANT APPLICATIONS.—

20 “(A) ESTABLISHMENT.—The President
21 shall establish a peer review process for a non-
22 partisan panel of at least 30 individuals with
23 expertise related to emergency management,
24 natural hazard mitigation for a wide variety of
25 hazards, including flooding, tornadoes, wildfire,

1 and earthquakes, or insurance underwriting to
2 conduct peer reviews of—

3 “(i) the projects contained in plans
4 submitted under this subsection; and

5 “(ii) previously denied projects resub-
6 mitted for approval and inclusion in a
7 preapproved project mitigation plan.

8 “(B) PEER REVIEW PANEL REQUIRE-
9 MENTS.—

10 “(i) TERM OF SERVICE.—The term of
11 service for a member of the panel shall be
12 1 year.

13 “(ii) LIMITATION ON SERVICE.—An
14 individual may not serve consecutive terms
15 on the panel.

16 “(iii) SOLICITATION.—Qualified indi-
17 viduals shall elect to serve on the panel fol-
18 lowing a solicitation by the President for
19 prospective panel members.

20 “(C) DUTIES.—In establishing the peer re-
21 view process under subparagraph (A), the
22 President shall require that the peer review
23 panel—

24 “(i) determine whether each project
25 listed in a plan submitted by a State or In-

1 dian tribal government under paragraph
2 (1) is cost-effective and designed to reduce
3 injuries, loss of life, and damage and de-
4 struction of property, including damage to
5 critical services and facilities under the ju-
6 risdiction of the State and or Indian tribal
7 government; and

8 “(ii) recommend to the President ap-
9 proval or denial of each such project not
10 later than 3 months after the submission
11 of such plan.

12 “(D) APPLICABILITY OF CHAPTER 10 OF
13 TITLE 5, UNITED STATES CODE.—Chapter 10 of
14 title 5, United States Code, shall not apply to
15 activities carried out under this paragraph.

16 “(6) DETERMINATION OF PLAN APPROVAL.—

17 “(A) INITIAL DETERMINATION.—Not later
18 than 1 month after receiving the recommenda-
19 tions under subparagraph (B)(ii), the President
20 shall—

21 “(i) approve or deny each project in
22 the plan submitted by a State or Indian
23 tribal government;

24 “(ii) for any plan that contains a
25 project that is approved, approve

1 preapproved project mitigation plan as
2 containing only the projects approved
3 under clause (i); and

4 “(iii) for any plan that contains a
5 project that is denied, notify the applicable
6 State or Indian tribal government, includ-
7 ing information on the reasons for such a
8 denial and any information necessary for
9 the State or Indian tribal government to
10 update such project for resubmission.

11 “(B) CONSIDERATIONS FOR APPROVAL.—

12 In approving a project under this subparagraph
13 (A)(i), the President shall consider the fol-
14 lowing:

15 “(i) The findings and recommenda-
16 tions of the peer reviews carried out under
17 paragraph (3).

18 “(ii) The degree to which the projects
19 contained in the plan reduce deaths, inju-
20 ries, and property damage by reducing the
21 risks associated with natural disasters.

22 “(iii) The extent of the need of the
23 entity to carry out the projects contained
24 in the plan and the potential of such

1 projects to mitigate hazards to the United
2 States.

3 “(C) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—The Presi-
4 dent may provide technical assistance to a State
5 or Indian tribal government with respect to
6 which a project was denied under subparagraph
7 (A)(i) to assist such State or Indian tribal gov-
8 ernment to resubmit the project for approval
9 under this subsection.

10 “(D) DEFAULT APPROVAL.—If the Presi-
11 dent does not make a determination or provide
12 notification under this paragraph, as applicable,
13 with respect to a plan submitted under para-
14 graph (1) not later than 1 month after the
15 peer-review panel submits recommendations
16 under paragraph (3)(B)(ii), such plan shall—

17 “(i) be deemed to be approved under
18 this subsection; and

19 “(ii) consist of only the projects rec-
20 ommended for approval by the peer review
21 panel under paragraph (3)(B)(ii).

22 “(E) RESUBMITTAL OF DENIED
23 PROJECT.—In any case in which a project in a
24 preapproved project mitigation plan is not ap-
25 proved, the State or Indian tribal government

1 may redevelop and resubmit such project for
2 approval at any time.

3 “(7) EFFECT OF PLAN APPROVAL.—A project
4 contained in a plan approved under this subsection
5 shall be considered approved under section 203, 205,
6 or 404, as applicable, and shall not be subject to any
7 additional approval requirements, procedures, or re-
8 views under any such section. The President shall
9 accept revised cost estimates for projects listed in
10 the preapproved project mitigation plan so long as
11 the revised cost is necessary to complete the project
12 as described in such plan, as determined by the
13 President.

14 “(8) ADDITIONS OF PROJECTS TO THE PLAN.—
15 A State or Indian tribal government that has a plan
16 approved under this subsection may submit an up-
17 dated plan 2 years after the date on which such plan
18 is approved, and every 2 years thereafter, that con-
19 tains additional proposed projects. The President
20 shall ensure that each additional project contained
21 in such updated plan be subject to the approval
22 project, including the peer-review process, under this
23 subsection.

24 “(9) SAVINGS CLAUSE.—Nothing in this section
25 shall be construed to limit the discretion of a State

1 or an Indian tribal government to prioritize or ad-
2 vance projects included in a mitigation approved by
3 the President.”.

4 **SEC. 302. REDUCING DISASTER COSTS AND PROTECTING**
5 **LIVES.**

6 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 203 of the Robert T.
7 Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act
8 (42 U.S.C. 5133) is amended—

9 (1) in subsection (c) by striking “or local gov-
10 ernment” each place it appears;

11 (2) by striking subsection (d) and inserting the
12 following:

13 “(d) LOCAL GOVERNMENT DISTRIBUTION.—

14 “(1) SUBALLOCATIONS.—Each State that re-
15 ceives assistance under this section shall distribute
16 not less than 50 percent of the funds allocated under
17 subsection (f) to local governments carrying out
18 mitigation projects under this section.

19 “(2) DISTRIBUTION AND REPORTING.—Not
20 later than 60 days after receiving assistance under
21 this section, the State shall distribute the suballoca-
22 tions pursuant to paragraph (1) or, in cases in
23 which the assistance would be used for a project that
24 is not contained in a preapproved project mitigation
25 plan under section 322(f), the State shall provide

1 the President with details on the mitigation meas-
2 ures for which such funds will be used by the local
3 government.”;

4 (3) in subsection (e)(1)(B)—

5 (A) in clause (iii) by striking “or” at the
6 end;

7 (B) in clause (iv) by striking the period at
8 the end and inserting “; or”; and

9 (C) by adding at the end the following:

10 “(v) to develop preapproved project
11 mitigation plans pursuant to section
12 322(f).”;

13 (4) in subsection (f)—

14 (A) in paragraph (1) by striking “on a
15 competitive basis for mitigation activities that
16 are cost-effective and in accordance with the
17 criteria in subsection (g)” and inserting “to
18 States and Indian tribal governments through
19 the allocation under paragraphs (2) and (4) for
20 mitigation activities that are cost-effective and
21 in accordance with subsection (g)”;

22 (B) by striking paragraph (2) and insert-
23 ing the following:

24 “(2) ALLOCATION.—In providing financial as-
25 sistance under this section, the President shall allo-

1 cate available funds for a fiscal year among eligible
2 States by formula as follows:

3 “(A) 40 percent of available funds shall be
4 distributed equally among each eligible State.

5 “(B) 20 percent of available funds shall be
6 distributed among each eligible State based on
7 a sliding scale that provides the highest share
8 of such funds to States that have the most vul-
9 nerability to natural hazards in the critical in-
10 frastructure of such States.

11 “(C) 20 percent of available funds shall be
12 distributed among each eligible State based on
13 a sliding scale that provides a higher share to
14 States that have a higher population and a
15 lower median income, using data from the most
16 recent decennial census.

17 “(D) 20 percent of available funds shall be
18 distributed among each eligible State based on
19 a sliding scale that provides the highest share
20 to States with the highest amount of approved
21 projects located in communities that meet the
22 definition of an economically distressed commu-
23 nity under section 301.3(a) of title 13, Code of
24 Federal Regulations, or a rural area under sec-

1 tion 343(a) of the Consolidated Farm and
2 Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1991(a)).”;

3 (C) in paragraph (3)(B) by striking “on a
4 competitive basis”; and

5 (D) by adding at the end the following:

6 “(4) TRIBES.—Under this section, the Presi-
7 dent shall ensure that the amount of financial assist-
8 ance made available to Indian tribal governments for
9 a fiscal year is not less than \$75,000,000.”;

10 (5) in subsection (g)—

11 (A) by striking “In determining whether to
12 provide technical and financial assistance to a
13 State or local government under this section,”
14 and inserting “In determining eligibility for
15 technical and financial assistance under this
16 section,”; and

17 (B) by striking “, and take into account—
18 ” and all that follows through the period at the
19 end and inserting a period;

20 (6) in subsection (h)(1), by striking “mitigation
21 activities approved by the President” and inserting
22 “a mitigation activity funded under this section”;

23 (7) in subsection (i)—

24 (A) in paragraph (1) by inserting “409,”
25 after “408,”; and

1 (B) in paragraph (3) by inserting “409,”
2 after “408,”; and

3 (8) by adding at the end the following:

4 “(n) PROJECT ADMINISTRATION.—A State or local
5 government under this section may provide funding for
6 projects—

7 “(1) executed through a partnership established
8 between 2 or more eligible entities to carry out a
9 project or similar projects;

10 “(2) undertaken by a private nonprofit facility;

11 “(3) undertaken as part of a public-private
12 partnership; or

13 “(4) executed through a combination of other
14 Federal mitigation programs, including the Federal
15 mitigation program under section 404.”.

16 (b) IMPLEMENTATION.—Not later than 90 days after
17 the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall
18 issue policy and guidance to implement the amendments
19 made by this section. Any existing regulations, policies,
20 or guidance that are no longer applicable as a result of
21 the amendments contained in this section or that conflict
22 with the letter or intent of such amendments are deemed
23 rescinded.

1 **SEC. 303. RESILIENT BUILDINGS AND COMMUNITIES.**

2 (a) PREDISASTER HAZARD MITIGATION.—Section
3 203 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emer-
4 gency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5133) is further amended
5 by inserting after subsection (l) the following:

6 “(m) LATEST PUBLISHED EDITIONS DEFINED.—
7 For purposes of subsections (e)(1)(B)(iv) and (g)(10), the
8 term ‘latest published editions’ means, with respect to rel-
9 evant consensus-based codes, specifications, and stand-
10 ards, the 2 most recently published editions.”.

11 (b) HAZARD MITIGATION REVOLVING LOAN FUND
12 PROGRAM.—Section 205(f)(5) of the Robert T. Stafford
13 Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C.
14 5135(f)(5)) is amended—

15 (1) in the paragraph heading, by striking “ES-
16 TABLISHING” and insert “IMPLEMENTING”;

17 (2) by striking “establish” and insert “imple-
18 ment”;

19 (3) by inserting “2” after “latest”; and

20 (4) by inserting “, including any amendments
21 made by State, local, Tribal, or territorial govern-
22 ments to such codes, specifications, and standards,”
23 after “standards”.

24 (c) RESIDENTIAL RETROFIT AND RESILIENCE PILOT
25 PROGRAM.—

1 (1) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Administrator of
2 the Federal Emergency Management Agency shall
3 carry out a residential resilience pilot program
4 through the program established under section 203
5 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emer-
6 gency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5133) to make
7 available assistance to States and local governments
8 for the purpose of providing grants to individuals for
9 residential resilience retrofits.

10 (2) AMOUNT OF FUNDS.—The Administrator
11 may use not more than 10 percent across allocations
12 of the assistance made available to applicants on an
13 annual basis under section 203 of the Robert T.
14 Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance
15 Act (42 U.S.C. 5133) to provide assistance under
16 this subsection.

17 (3) TIMELINE.—The Administrator shall estab-
18 lish the pilot program under this subsection not later
19 than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act
20 and the program shall terminate on September 30,
21 2028.

22 (4) PRIORITY.—In carrying out the pilot pro-
23 gram under this subsection, the Administrator shall
24 ensure that a State or local government receiving as-

1 sistance under the program provides grants to indi-
2 viduals that demonstrate financial need.

3 (5) REPORT.—Not later than 4 years after the
4 date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator
5 shall submit to the Committee on Transportation
6 and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives
7 and the Committee on Homeland Security and Gov-
8 ernmental Affairs of the Senate a report that in-
9 cludes—

10 (A) a summary of the grant awards and
11 projects carried out under this subsection;

12 (B) a detailed compilation of results
13 achieved by the grant awards and projects car-
14 ried out under this subsection, including the
15 number of homes receiving retrofits, the types
16 and average costs of retrofits, demographic in-
17 formation for participants in the program, and
18 estimate avoidance in disaster impacts and Fed-
19 eral disaster payments as a result of the grant
20 investments; and

21 (C) any identified implementation chal-
22 lenges and recommendations for improvements
23 to the pilot program.

1 (6) APPLICABILITY.—This subsection shall only
2 apply to amounts appropriated on or after the date
3 of enactment of this Act.

4 (7) RESIDENTIAL RESILIENT RETROFITS DE-
5 FINED.—

6 (A) IN GENERAL.—In this subsection, the
7 term “residential resilient retrofits” means a
8 project that—

9 (i) is designed to increase the resil-
10 ience of an existing home or residence
11 using mitigation measures which the Ad-
12 ministrator determines reduce damage and
13 impacts from natural disaster hazards and
14 risks that are most likely to occur in the
15 area where the home is located; and

16 (ii) to the extent applicable, are con-
17 sistent with the 2 most recently published
18 editions of relevant consensus-based codes,
19 specifications, and standards, including
20 any amendments made by State, local,
21 tribal, or territorial governments to such
22 codes, specifications, and standards that
23 incorporate the latest hazard-resistant de-
24 signs and establish criteria for the design,
25 construction, and maintenance of residen-

1 tial structures and facilities that may be
2 eligible for assistance under the Robert T.
3 Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency
4 Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.)
5 for the purpose of protecting the health,
6 safety, and general welfare of the build-
7 ings’ users against disasters.

8 (B) INCLUSION.—In this subsection, the
9 term “residential resilient retrofits” includes—

10 (i) elevations of homes and elevations
11 of utilities within and around structures to
12 mitigate damages;

13 (ii) floodproofing measures;

14 (iii) the construction of tornado-safe
15 rooms;

16 (iv) seismic retrofits;

17 (v) wildfire retrofit and mitigation
18 measures;

19 (vi) wind retrofits, including roof re-
20 placements, hurricane straps, and tie-
21 downs; and

22 (vii) any other measures that meet the
23 requirements of paragraph (1), as deter-
24 mined by the Administrator.

1 **SEC. 304. STRENGTHENING HAZARD RISK REDUCTION.**

2 (a) IMPROVED HAZARD MITIGATION DELIVERY.—

3 (1) IN GENERAL.—Section 404(c)(2) of the
4 Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency
5 Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170c(c)(2)) is amend-
6 ed—

7 (A) by striking “The President” and all
8 that follows through “as a pilot program.”; and

9 (B) by striking “The criteria shall” insert-
10 ing “The President shall establish criteria for
11 the approval of applications submitted under
12 paragraph (1) that”.

13 (2) PROJECT CONSOLIDATION.—Section 404 of
14 the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emer-
15 gency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170c) is amended
16 by adding at the end the following:

17 “(h) MITIGATION PROJECT CONSOLIDATIONS.—

18 “(1) ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES.—Notwithstanding
19 section 312 and any regulations implementing such
20 section, assistance provided under this section for a
21 mitigation project may be used in combination
22 with—

23 “(A) assistance provided under section
24 203; and

25 “(B) any other Federal assistance provided
26 for such project.

1 “(2) FEDERAL AND NON-FEDERAL SHARE.—
2 For purposes of the Federal share requirements of
3 a mitigation project under this section—

4 “(A) any Federal assistance provided
5 under section 203 for such project shall be ap-
6 plied toward the Federal share required under
7 this section; and

8 “(B) any non-Federal funds for such miti-
9 gation project that are specified to meet the
10 Federal share requirements of section 203 may
11 be used to meet the non-Federal share require-
12 ments under this section.

13 “(3) TOTAL FEDERAL SHARE.—Federal assist-
14 ance provided for a mitigation project under this
15 section and section 203 may not exceed the total
16 Federal share for such project.

17 “(4) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in
18 this section shall—

19 “(A) affect the cost-share requirement of a
20 hazard mitigation measure under this section;

21 “(B) affect the eligibility criteria for a haz-
22 ard mitigation measure under this section or
23 section 203; or

1 “(C) affect the cost share requirements of
2 a federally authorized hazard mitigation
3 project.”.

4 (b) PREPAYMENT RELIEF FOR HAZARD MITIGA-
5 TION.—Section 404(e) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster
6 Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C.
7 5170c(e)) is amended to read as follows:

8 “(e) ADVANCE ASSISTANCE.—

9 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The President may provide
10 the total Federal share of the estimated cost of haz-
11 ard mitigation measures to a State grantee eligible
12 for a grant under this section before eligible costs
13 are incurred.

14 “(2) HOME RETROFITS.—The Administrator
15 shall offer to advance assistance to applicants from
16 such Federal share for purposes of home retrofits to
17 improve resilience, including home elevations, total-
18 ing the total amount of the estimated Federal share
19 of such project before eligible costs are incurred.”.

20 (c) APPLICABILITY.—The amendments made by this
21 section shall apply to a major disaster or emergency de-
22 clared under such Act before the date of enactment of this
23 Act for which the period for processing requests for assist-
24 ance has not ended as of the date of enactment of this
25 Act.

1 **SEC. 305. UTILITY RESILIENCY.**

2 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 403 of the Robert T.
3 Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act
4 (42 U.S.C. 5170b) is amended by adding at the end the
5 following:

6 “(e) ELECTRIC UTILITIES.—

7 “(1) HAZARD MITIGATION ACTIVITIES.—An
8 electric utility may carry out cost-effective hazard
9 mitigation activities jointly or otherwise in combina-
10 tion with activities for the restoration of power car-
11 ried out with assistance provided under this section.

12 “(2) ELIGIBILITY FOR ADDITIONAL ASSIST-
13 ANCE.—In any case in which an electric utility facil-
14 ity receives assistance under this section for the
15 emergency restoration of power, the receipt of such
16 assistance shall not render such facility ineligible for
17 any hazard mitigation assistance under section 406
18 for which such facility is otherwise eligible.”.

19 (b) APPLICABILITY.—The amendment made by sub-
20 section (a) shall only apply to amounts appropriated on
21 or after the date of enactment of this Act.

22 **SEC. 306. ADDITIONAL AMENDMENTS TO HAZARD MITIGA-**
23 **TION REVOLVING LOAN FUND.**

24 Section 205 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief
25 and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5135) is
26 amended—

1 (1) in subsection (c)(2)(A) by inserting “hazard
2 mitigation, resilience, and” before “emergency man-
3 agement”; and

4 (2) in subsection (f)(1)(C) by striking “2” and
5 inserting “4”.

6 **SEC. 307. STREAMLINED HAZARD MITIGATION APPLICA-**
7 **TION PROCESS.**

8 Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment
9 of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Emergency
10 Management Agency shall establish a consolidated grant
11 application form for hazard mitigation funds provided
12 under sections 203, 205, and 404 of the Robert T. Staf-
13 ford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42
14 U.S.C. 5133; 5135; 5170c), to—

15 (1) facilitate the administration of hazard miti-
16 gation funds established under such sections;

17 (2) facilitate the administration of hazard miti-
18 gation funds established under the National Flood
19 Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4001 et seq.) and
20 section 322(f) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster
21 Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (as added by
22 this Act);

23 (3) ensure the provision of hazard mitigation
24 assistance in accordance with applicable laws and
25 regulations;

1 (4) reduce the administrative burden of the ap-
2 plication and review process; and

3 (5) expedite the execution of grant agreements
4 and the disbursement of funds.

5 **SEC. 308. STUDY AND REPORT ON MITIGATION BENEFITS.**

6 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the Federal
7 Emergency Management Agency shall conduct a study to
8 evaluate the effectiveness, long-term cost savings, and
9 strategic impact of nationwide hazard mitigation activities
10 funded by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

11 (b) OBJECTIVES.—In conducting the study required
12 under subsection (a), the Administrator shall assess how
13 the mitigation programs of the Federal Emergency Man-
14 agement Agency—

15 (1) reduce Federal and non-Federal expendi-
16 tures for disaster response and recovery;

17 (2) enhance community preparedness for nat-
18 ural hazards;

19 (3) improve the availability and affordability of
20 hazard-related insurance;

21 (4) support continuity of operations for critical
22 services and infrastructure; and

23 (5) generate long-term cost savings and meas-
24 urable returns on investment.

1 (c) METHODOLOGY.—The study under subsection (a)
2 shall include—

3 (1) quantitative and qualitative analysis of
4 avoided losses;

5 (2) evaluations of the effect of hazard mitiga-
6 tion on community-level risk ratings, actuarial as-
7 sessments, and insurance penetration;

8 (3) case studies from diverse geographic regions
9 and hazard types; and

10 (4) examinations of the role of mitigation activi-
11 ties in reducing Federal disaster response and recov-
12 ery costs.

13 (d) DATA SOURCES.—In carrying out the study
14 under subsection (a), the Administrator shall use data
15 from—

16 (1) Federal, State, local, and Tribal agencies;

17 (2) independent third-party assessments and
18 academic studies; and

19 (3) internal program evaluations and disaster
20 recovery records.

21 (e) CONSULTATION.—In conducting the study under
22 subsection (a), the Administrator may consult with—

23 (1) the Comptroller General of the United
24 States;

1 (2) the Director of the National Institute of
2 Standards and Technology;

3 (3) State, local, Tribal, and territorial govern-
4 ments; and

5 (4) relevant academic and research institutions.

6 (f) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—

7 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 18 months
8 after the date of enactment of this Act and annually
9 thereafter, the Administrator shall submit to the
10 Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
11 and the Committee on Appropriations of the House
12 of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland
13 Security and Governmental Affairs and the Com-
14 mittee on Appropriations of the Senate a report de-
15 tailing—

16 (A) the findings of the study;

17 (B) recommendations for improving pro-
18 gram design, targeting, and oversight; and

19 (C) recommendations for legislative and
20 administrative actions.

21 (2) AVAILABILITY.—The Administrator shall
22 make each report submitted under paragraph (1)
23 publicly available on the website of the Federal
24 Emergency Management Agency not later than 60
25 days after the submission of such report.

1 (g) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY AND ONGOING REVIEW.—

2 (1) PUBLIC ACCESS.—Not later than 2 years
3 after the date of enactment of this Act, the Adminis-
4 trator shall make the results of the initial study re-
5 quired under subsection (a) publicly available in a
6 searchable, user-friendly format on the website of
7 the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

8 (2) CONTENTS.—The published data under
9 paragraph (1) shall include—

10 (A) summarized findings and datasets, ex-
11 cluding any information that would compromise
12 national security or privacy;

13 (B) visualizations and geographic
14 mappings of mitigation outcomes; and

15 (C) clear explanations of methodology,
16 data sources, and limitations.

17 (h) ANNUAL UPDATES.—The Administrator shall
18 conduct the study described in subsection (a) on an annual
19 basis, incorporating the most recent available data, up-
20 dates to methodology, and stakeholder feedback.

21 **TITLE IV—TRANSPARENCY AND** 22 **ACCOUNTABILITY**

23 **SEC. 401. GAO REVIEW OF FEMA TRANSITION.**

24 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 6 months after the
25 date of enactment of this Act, and every 6 months there-

1 after, the Comptroller General of the United States
2 shall—

3 (1) conduct a review of the transition of the
4 Federal Emergency Management Agency under title
5 I; and

6 (2) provide a briefing on the results of the re-
7 view conducted under paragraph (1) to the Com-
8 mittee on Transportation and Infrastructure and the
9 Committee on Homeland Security of the House of
10 Representatives and the Committee on Homeland
11 Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate.

12 (b) SCOPE.—In conducting the reviews required
13 under subsection (a), the Comptroller General shall assess
14 the following:

15 (1) The continued processing of grants for con-
16 structing, reconstructing, repairing, restoring, or re-
17 placing eligible facilities.

18 (2) The establishment of the Federal Emer-
19 gency Management Agency as a cabinet-level inde-
20 pendent establishment in the executive branch to
21 evaluate whether the transition complied with Fed-
22 eral laws relating to labor, procurement, information
23 management, and related statutes.

24 (3) The status of the contractual obligations of
25 the Agency.

1 (4) Interdepartmental coordination, establish-
2 ment of new memorandums of understanding, and
3 assistance from the Department of Homeland Secu-
4 rity to ensure that the Department fulfills all statu-
5 tory requirements to ensure optimal agency perform-
6 ance during the transition.

7 (5) Costs associated with the transition of per-
8 sonnel, equipment, furnishings, and related contents
9 over the course of the transition.

10 (6) Personnel retention related to the transi-
11 tion.

12 (7) Physical and technological infrastructure
13 needs and which of the needs have been met, to en-
14 sure that the Agency has been provided with the
15 necessary resources to carry out the mission of the
16 Agency, following the transition of the Agency.

17 (8) Programmatic operations during the transi-
18 tion of the Agency.

19 (9) Communication operations to monitor con-
20 tinued connectivity with stakeholders, including
21 State emergency managers, private nonprofit organi-
22 zations, and other related parties, during the transi-
23 tion.

24 (10) Engineer personnel levels at the Agency.

1 (11) Contracts entered into with licensed engi-
2 neering professionals in States that are in geo-
3 graphic areas in which a major disaster has recently
4 been declared under section 401 of the Robert T.
5 Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance
6 Act (42 U.S.C. 5170).

7 (12) Best practices and lessons learned during
8 the transition, in coordination with the Adminis-
9 trator of the Federal Emergency Management Agen-
10 cy and any other key personnel of the Agency.

11 (c) SUNSET.—This section shall cease to be effective
12 on the date that is 36 months after the date of enactment
13 of this Act, or an earlier date agreed upon by the Comp-
14 troller General and the committees of Congress specified
15 in subsection (a).

16 **SEC. 402. TRANSPARENCY AND ONLINE ACCOUNTABILITY.**

17 (a) SUBPAGE FOR TRANSPARENCY OF DISASTER AS-
18 SISTANCE.—

19 (1) ESTABLISHMENT OF REPOSITORY FOR RE-
20 PORTING REQUIREMENTS.—The Director of the Of-
21 fice of Management and Budget, in consultation
22 with the Secretary of the Treasury and the head of
23 each covered Federal agency, shall establish a
24 subpage within the website established under section
25 2 of the Federal Funding Accountability and Trans-

1 parency Act of 2006 (31 U.S.C. 6101 note) to pub-
2 lish the information required to be made available to
3 the public under this subsection.

4 (2) SUBMISSION OF INFORMATION BY FEDERAL
5 AGENCIES.—Not later than 30 days after the end of
6 a calendar quarter, each covered Federal agency
7 that made disaster assistance available to an eligible
8 recipient during such quarter shall, in coordination
9 with the Director of the Office of Management and
10 Budget, make available to the public on the subpage
11 established under paragraph (1) the information de-
12 scribed in paragraph (3), and ensure that any data
13 assets of the agency are machine-readable.

14 (3) INFORMATION REQUIRED.—The information
15 described in this paragraph is, with respect to dis-
16 aster assistance provided by the covered Federal
17 agency—

18 (A) the total amount of disaster assistance
19 provided by the agency during such quarter;

20 (B) the amount of disaster assistance pro-
21 vided by the agency that was expended or obli-
22 gated to projects or activities; and

23 (C) a detailed list of all projects or activi-
24 ties for which disaster assistance dispersed by

1 the agency was expended, obligated, or used, in-
2 cluding—

3 (i) the name of the project or activity;

4 (ii) a description of the project or ac-
5 tivity;

6 (iii) an evaluation of the completion
7 status of the project or activity;

8 (iv) any award identification number
9 assigned to the project;

10 (v) the Catalog for Disaster Assist-
11 ance number assigned by the Federal
12 Emergency Management Agency;

13 (vi) the location of the project, includ-
14 ing ZIP Codes; and

15 (vii) any reporting requirement infor-
16 mation being collected by a covered Fed-
17 eral agency with respect to that agency's
18 disaster assistance.

19 (4) GUIDANCE.—Each covered Federal agency,
20 in coordination with the Director of the Office of
21 Management and Budget and the Secretary of the
22 Treasury, shall issue such guidance as is necessary
23 to meet the requirements of this section.

24 (5) AGREEMENT WITH PRIVATE ENTITY.—The
25 Director, if necessary for purposes of transparency,

1 may enter into an agreement with a private entity,
2 including a nonprofit organization, to develop the
3 subpage required under this subsection.

4 (b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

5 (1) COVERED FEDERAL AGENCY.—The term
6 “covered Federal agency” means—

7 (A) any agency providing assistance under
8 the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and
9 Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et
10 seq.);

11 (B) the Small Business Administration;
12 and

13 (C) the Department of Housing and Urban
14 Development.

15 (2) DISASTER ASSISTANCE.—The term “dis-
16 aster assistance” means any funds that are made
17 available by the Federal Government in response to
18 a specified natural disaster, including—

19 (A) any assistance provided by the Admin-
20 istrator of the Small Business Administration
21 as a result of a disaster declared under section
22 7(b) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C.
23 636(b));

1 (B) any assistance provided by the Sec-
2 retary of Housing and Urban Development
3 for—

4 (i) activities authorized under title I
5 of the Housing and Community Develop-
6 ment Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 5301 et seq.)
7 related to disaster relief, long-term recov-
8 ery, restoration of infrastructure and hous-
9 ing, and economic revitalization in the
10 most impacted and distressed areas result-
11 ing from a major disaster declared pursu-
12 ant to the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Re-
13 lief and Emergency Assistance Act (42
14 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.); and

15 (ii) flood insurance coverage provided
16 under the National Flood Insurance Pro-
17 gram pursuant to the National Flood In-
18 surance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4001 et
19 seq.); and

20 (C) any assistance provided under the Rob-
21 ert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency
22 Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.).

23 (3) ELIGIBLE RECIPIENT.—The term “eligible
24 recipient”—

1 (A) means any entity that receives disaster
2 assistance directly from the Federal Govern-
3 ment (including disaster assistance received
4 through grant, loan, or contract) other than an
5 individual; and

6 (B) includes a State that receives disaster
7 assistance.

8 (4) SPECIFIED NATURAL DISASTER.—The term
9 “specified natural disaster” means—

10 (A) a fire on public or private forest land
11 or grassland described in section 420 of the
12 Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emer-
13 gency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5187);

14 (B) a major disaster declared by the Presi-
15 dent under section 401 of such Act (42 U.S.C.
16 5170);

17 (C) an emergency declared by the Presi-
18 dent under section 501 of such Act (42 U.S.C.
19 5191); and

20 (D) any other natural disaster for which a
21 disaster declaration is made by the Federal
22 Government.

23 **SEC. 403. PROHIBITION ON POLITICAL DISCRIMINATION.**

24 Section 308(a) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Re-
25 lief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5151(a))

1 is amended by striking “or economic status” and inserting
2 “economic status, or political affiliation”.

3 **SEC. 404. REVIEW OF BURDENSOME REGULATIONS AND**
4 **POLICIES.**

5 Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment
6 of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States
7 shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security and
8 Governmental Affairs of the Senate and the Committee
9 on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of
10 Representatives a report that—

11 (1) identifies any regulations, policies, and pro-
12 cedures promulgated pursuant to the Robert T.
13 Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance
14 Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.) that—

15 (A) are obsolete;

16 (B) conflict with other regulations, policies,
17 and procedures;

18 (C) conflict with current law;

19 (D) set more stringent requirements than
20 required by law; and

21 (E) create unnecessary burdens and costs
22 on disaster assistance; and

23 (2) contains recommendations on which regula-
24 tions, policies, and procedures should be amended or
25 rescinded.

1 **SEC. 405. REPORT ON ASSISTANCE TO INDIVIDUALS.**

2 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the
3 date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the
4 Federal Emergency Management Agency shall submit to
5 the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of
6 the House of Representatives and the Committee on
7 Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Sen-
8 ate a report with respect to fiscal year 2016 through the
9 most recent fiscal year ending before the date of enact-
10 ment of this Act, and an annual report for any fiscal year
11 beginning on or after the date of enactment of this Act,
12 describing—

13 (1) the average amount of individual assistance
14 and individual and household assistance provided
15 under section 408 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster
16 Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C.
17 5121 et seq.) to, and the rate of denial of individual
18 assistance and individual and household assistance
19 provided under such section for—

20 (A) all individuals;

21 (B) households;

22 (C) individuals and households with a re-
23 ported annual income under 75 percent of the
24 national median household income;

1 (D) individuals with a reported annual in-
2 come over 125 percent of the national median
3 household income; and

4 (E) individuals with a reported annual in-
5 come between 75 percent and 125 percent of
6 the national median household income; and

7 (2) an explanation for any factors causing an
8 increase in the rate of denial of the assistance de-
9 scribed in paragraph (1), if applicable.

10 (b) INFORMATION REQUIRED.—In the report sub-
11 mitted under subsection (a), the Administrator shall de-
12 scribe the number of homeowners and the number of rent-
13 ers for each category of individuals and households de-
14 scribed in subparagraphs (C) through (E) of subsection
15 (a)(1).

16 **SEC. 406. INDIVIDUAL ASSISTANCE DASHBOARD.**

17 Title IV of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and
18 Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170 et seq.) is
19 amended by adding at the end the following:

20 **“SEC. 431. INDIVIDUAL ASSISTANCE DASHBOARD.**

21 “(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after a
22 declaration by the President that a major disaster exists
23 under section 401, the Administrator of the Federal
24 Emergency Management Agency shall publish on a

1 website of the Agency an interactive web tool displaying
2 the following information with respect to such disaster:

3 “(1) The number of applications for assistance
4 under section 408, including a description of the
5 number of applications for assistance related to
6 housing under such section and the number of appli-
7 cations for assistance to address other needs under
8 section 408(e).

9 “(2) The number of applications for such as-
10 sistance that are approved.

11 “(3) The number of applications for such as-
12 sistance that are denied.

13 “(4) A ranked list of the reasons for the denial
14 of such applications, including the number of appli-
15 cations for each reason for denial.

16 “(5) If available, the dollar amount of assist-
17 ance provided pursuant to section 408 to applicants
18 who are—

19 “(A) property owners with a household an-
20 nual income—

21 “(i) above the national median house-
22 hold income; and

23 “(ii) below the national median house-
24 hold income; and

1 “(B) renters with a household annual in-
2 come—

3 “(i) above the national median house-
4 hold income; and

5 “(ii) below the national median house-
6 hold income.

7 “(6) The estimated percentage of residential
8 property that was destroyed as a result of the major
9 disaster, if available.

10 “(7) Any other information that the Adminis-
11 trator determines to be relevant.

12 “(b) PERSONALLY IDENTIFIABLE INFORMATION.—
13 The Administrator shall ensure that none of the informa-
14 tion published under subsection (a) contains the personally
15 identifiable information of an applicant.”.

16 **SEC. 407. GAO REPORT ON PRELIMINARY DAMAGE ASSESS-**
17 **MENTS.**

18 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Comptroller General of the
19 United States shall conduct a study on the practices, in-
20 cluding the accuracy of such practices, that the Federal
21 Emergency Management Agency uses when conducting
22 preliminary damage assessments for the purposes of pro-
23 viding assistance under section 408 of the Robert T. Staf-
24 ford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42
25 U.S.C. 5174).

1 (b) CONTENTS.—The Comptroller General shall in-
2 clude in the study conducted under subsection (a) the fol-
3 lowing:

4 (1) A comparison of the process and procedures
5 used by the Federal Emergency Management Agen-
6 cy to complete preliminary damage assessments to
7 the process and procedures used by private insur-
8 ance companies following a major disaster.

9 (2) A review of training provided to individuals
10 conducting preliminary damage assessments.

11 (3) A comparison of damage estimates for
12 homes owned by individuals above the national me-
13 dian income to homes owned by individuals at or
14 below the national median income.

15 **SEC. 408. IMPROVED RENTAL ASSISTANCE.**

16 (a) STUDY.—Not later than 1 year after the date of
17 enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal
18 Emergency Management Agency shall conduct a study to
19 examine the unique challenges of renters when seeking
20 Federal disaster assistance and any disparities of assist-
21 ance provided to homeowners and renters pursuant to sec-
22 tion 408 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and
23 Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5174) and develop
24 a plan that addresses any identified challenges and dis-

1 parities, including any recommendations for legislative ac-
2 tion.

3 (b) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Upon completion of the
4 activities carried out under subsection (a), the Adminis-
5 trator shall submit to the Committee on Transportation
6 and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and
7 the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental
8 Affairs of the Senate a report containing the study and
9 recommendations required under subsection (a).

10 (c) CONSULTATION.—In completing the study and re-
11 port required under subsections (a) and (b), the Adminis-
12 trator shall consult with appropriate Federal entities and
13 stakeholders involved in disaster housing.

14 **SEC. 409. GAO ASSESSMENT ON IDENTITY THEFT AND DIS-**
15 **ASTER FRAUD IN DISASTER ASSISTANCE**
16 **PROGRAMS.**

17 Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment
18 of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States
19 shall—

20 (1) conduct an assessment of improper and po-
21 tentially fraudulent Federal disaster assistance for
22 individuals made to survivors of major disasters de-
23 clared in 2020 and 2021, including through identity
24 theft; and

1 (2) submit to the Committee on Transportation
2 and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives
3 and the Committee on Homeland Security and Gov-
4 ernmental Affairs of the Senate a report that de-
5 scribes—

6 (A) the prevalence of improper and poten-
7 tially fraudulent Federal disaster assistance for
8 individuals made to registrants who used invalid
9 information to apply for disaster assistance, in-
10 cluding through identity theft;

11 (B) the number of disaster survivors whose
12 claims for Federal disaster assistance for indi-
13 viduals were denied due to another individual
14 filing a fraudulent application using their per-
15 sonal identifying information;

16 (C) the adequacy of existing fraud preven-
17 tion protocols in place on the Federal Emer-
18 gency Management Agency's online application
19 for Federal disaster assistance for individuals;
20 and

21 (D) recommendations for improving the
22 identity verification protocols in place for Fed-
23 eral disaster assistance for individuals.

1 **SEC. 410. GAO STUDY ON INSURANCE UTILIZATION FOR**
2 **PUBLIC ASSISTANCE-ELIGIBLE FACILITIES.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the
4 date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General
5 of the United States shall complete a study on the utiliza-
6 tion of insurance by facilities eligible for public assistance.

7 (b) MATTERS TO BE STUDIED.—In conducting the
8 study under subsection (a), the Comptroller General shall
9 examine the following:

10 (1) The effect of insurance coverage of a State
11 on declarations by the President under section 401
12 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emer-
13 gency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170) that a major
14 disaster exists in such State.

15 (2) Trends in insurance coverage for facilities
16 eligible for public assistance before and after such
17 facilities receive public assistance.

18 (3) The enforcement of insurance purchase re-
19 quirements under section 206.253 of title 44, Code
20 of Federal Regulations.

21 (4) Rates of noncompliance with, or lapses in,
22 required insurance coverage by recipients of public
23 assistance.

24 (5) Rates of insurance coverage among critical
25 facilities eligible for public assistance, including hos-

1 pitals, emergency operations centers, and public
2 safety buildings.

3 (6) Changes in facilities eligible for public as-
4 sistance obtaining insurance coverage after revisions
5 to flood hazard maps or other hazard designations.

6 (c) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Upon completion of the
7 study required under subsection (a), the Comptroller Gen-
8 eral shall submit to Congress a report describing the re-
9 sults of such study, including findings and any rec-
10 ommendations for legislative or administrative action.

11 (d) PUBLIC ASSISTANCE DEFINED.—In this section,
12 the term “public assistance” means assistance provided
13 under section 403, 406, 409, or 428 of the Robert T. Staf-
14 ford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act.

15 **SEC. 411. STUDY ON WILDFIRE MANAGEMENT PLANS.**

16 (a) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date
17 of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the
18 United States shall conduct a study, and submit a report
19 thereon to the Committee on Homeland Security and Gov-
20 ernmental Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on
21 Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Rep-
22 resentatives, on wildfire management plans.

23 (b) CONTENTS.—In the report submitted under sub-
24 section (a), the Comptroller General shall include the fol-
25 lowing:

1 (1) A list and description of States that have a
2 completed forest management plan, wildland man-
3 agement plan, or any similar plan intended to guide
4 actions the State plans to take to mitigate the risk
5 of wildfires with respect to non-Federal lands.

6 (2) A description of States that have a high
7 risk of wildfires.

8 (3) For the States described in paragraph (2)—

9 (A) a list of the States that have completed
10 a plan described in paragraph (1); and

11 (B) a description of whether such plan is
12 effective at mitigating the risk of wildfires.

13 (4) An analysis of whether each State with a
14 plan described in paragraph (1) follows such plan
15 and makes available adequate resources to meet the
16 goals of such plan.

17 (5) An analysis of whether any Federal funding
18 for hazard mitigation provided to States with a high
19 risk of wildfires is used to carry out activities related
20 to mitigating the risk of wildfires.

21 (6) For wildfires that occurred during the 5-
22 year period ending on the date of enactment of this
23 Act, in States that did not have a plan described in
24 paragraph (1), an analysis as to whether damage

1 from such wildfires may have been reduced if such
2 States had such a plan in place.

3 (7) A comparison of the plans listed under
4 paragraph (1) and an identification of best practices
5 and areas for improvement.

6 (8) Recommendations on whether incentives are
7 needed in Federal funding for States to develop
8 plans described in paragraph (1) and follow such
9 plans.

10 **SEC. 412. EFFECTIVENESS OF LOCAL, STATE, TERRITORY,**
11 **AND FEDERAL ALERTING SYSTEMS.**

12 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Comptroller General of the
13 United States shall conduct a study on the effectiveness
14 of local, State, territory, and Federal emergency alerting
15 systems in disseminating timely and relevant information
16 during weather-related emergencies to help communities
17 develop better policies and procedures for emergency re-
18 sponse and enhance public safety in the event of a weath-
19 er-related emergency.

20 (b) CONTENTS.—In conducting the study under sub-
21 section (a), the Comptroller General shall—

22 (1) evaluate the efficacy of various alert medi-
23 ums, including platforms such as social media, to
24 disseminate emergency alerts, including travel bans

1 and mass power outages, during extreme weather
2 events;

3 (2) assess the extent that guidance and training
4 exists for developing alert content, such as ensuring
5 alerts are clear, relevant, and provide the public with
6 actionable information; and

7 (3) determine whether improvements could be
8 made to public alerting, including outdoor siren sys-
9 tems, based on input from a selected sample of
10 emergency managers, local officials, and community
11 groups.

12 (c) REPORT.—Not later than 18 months after the
13 date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General
14 shall submit to the Committee on Transportation and In-
15 frastructure and the Committee on Homeland Security of
16 the House of Representatives and the Committee on
17 Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Sen-
18 ate a report on the study conducted under subsection (a).

19 **SEC. 413. GAO REVIEW OF MANAGEMENT COSTS.**

20 Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment
21 of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States
22 shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security and
23 Governmental Affairs of the Senate and the Committee
24 on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of
25 Representatives a report—

1 (1) on the actual management costs described
2 in section 324 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster
3 Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C.
4 5165b) during the period of a major disaster dec-
5 laration under section 401 of such Act (42 U.S.C.
6 5170) to determine whether the amount set aside for
7 those management costs after the date of enactment
8 of this Act is appropriate; and

9 (2) that includes the management costs de-
10 scribed in section 324 of the Robert T. Stafford Dis-
11 aster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42
12 U.S.C. 5165b) for each disaster declared under dur-
13 ing the period of a major disaster declaration under
14 section 401 of such Act (42 U.S.C. 5170) during the
15 5-year period preceding the date of the report, the
16 amount set aside for those management costs, the
17 use of those management costs, the length of each
18 disaster, and the reason for the length of each dis-
19 aster.

20 **SEC. 414. REPORT ON COORDINATION OF DISASTER ASSIST-**
21 **ANCE TO INDIVIDUALS.**

22 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the
23 date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the
24 Federal Emergency Management Agency, in coordination
25 with other relevant Federal agencies, shall submit to the

1 congressional committees of jurisdiction a report con-
2 ducted by all relevant Federal agencies to improve the
3 comprehensive delivery of disaster assistance to individ-
4 uals following a major disaster or emergency declaration
5 under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emer-
6 gency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.).

7 (b) CONTENTS.—The report required under para-
8 graph (1) shall include both administrative actions taken,
9 or planned to be taken, by the agencies as well as legisla-
10 tive proposals, where appropriate, of the following:

11 (1) Efforts to improve coordination between the
12 Agency and other relevant Federal agencies when
13 delivering disaster assistance to individuals.

14 (2) Clarify the sequence of delivery of disaster
15 assistance to individuals from the Agency, and other
16 relevant Federal agencies.

17 (3) Clarify the interpretation and implementa-
18 tion of section 312 of the Robert T. Stafford Dis-
19 aster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42
20 U.S.C. 5155) when providing disaster assistance to
21 individuals, including providing a common interpre-
22 tation across the Agency, and other relevant Federal
23 agencies, of the definitions and requirements under
24 such section 312.

1 (4) Increase the effectiveness of communication
2 to applicants for assistance programs for individuals
3 after a disaster declaration, including the breadth of
4 programs available and the potential impacts of uti-
5 lizing one program versus another.

6 (c) REPORT UPDATE.—Not later than 4 years after
7 the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator, in
8 coordination with other relevant Federal agencies, shall
9 submit to the congressional committees of jurisdiction an
10 update to the report required under paragraph (1).

11 **SEC. 415. GAO REVIEW OF COST SAVINGS ASSOCIATED**
12 **WITH REPAIR AND REBUILDING REFORMS.**

13 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 3 years after the
14 date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General
15 of the United States shall complete a study on repair and
16 rebuilding reforms carried out by the Administrator of the
17 Federal Emergency Management Agency.

18 (b) CONTENTS.—The Comptroller General shall in-
19 clude in the study conducted under subsection (a) the fol-
20 lowing:

21 (1) A comprehensive review of the costs associ-
22 ated with providing direct housing assistance options
23 in response to a major disaster or emergency, in-
24 cluding temporary housing units, transportable tem-

1 porary housing units, hoteling programs, and rental
2 assistance.

3 (2) An assessment of—

4 (A) the relative cost and timeliness of pro-
5 viding permanent repairs or reconstruction of
6 owner-occupied residences compared to the pro-
7 vision of direct housing assistance options, in-
8 cluding an evaluation of both short-term ex-
9 penditures and long-term Federal obligations;

10 (B) the effect of permanent repairs or re-
11 construction assistance on recovery outcomes
12 for survivors of major disasters, including time
13 to reestablishment, housing stability, health and
14 safety, and economic self-sufficiency, in com-
15 parison to the recovery outcomes for such sur-
16 vivors who received temporary sheltering;

17 (C) the effect of permanent repairs or re-
18 construction on the ability of survivors of major
19 disasters to remain in or return to predisaster
20 communities, including implications for commu-
21 nity cohesion and regional workforce stability;

22 (D) the benefits and potential challenges of
23 expanding the role of the Federal Emergency
24 Management Agency in direct repair or recon-
25 struction, including staffing, coordination with

1 States or Tribal governments, and interagency
2 collaboration;

3 (E) the effect of repair and rebuilding re-
4 forms on long-term Federal disaster recovery li-
5 abilities, including the potential for cost avoid-
6 ance in future disaster assistance, housing dis-
7 placement, and repeat assistance cases; and

8 (F) the adequacy of existing or proposed
9 safeguards to protect Federal funds.

10 (3) A review of the use of permanent repairs of
11 owner-occupied residences and permanent housing
12 construction by the Administrator, including best
13 practices and lessons learned.

14 (c) REPORT.—Upon completion of the study required
15 under subsection (a), the Comptroller General shall sub-
16 mit to Congress a report describing the results of such
17 study, including findings and any recommendations for
18 legislative or administrative action.

19 (d) REPAIR AND REBUILDING REFORMS DEFINED.—
20 In this section, the term “repair and rebuilding reforms”
21 means reforms to the provision of assistance under sec-
22 tions 403 and 408 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Re-
23 lief and Emergency Assistance Act as a result of the
24 amendments made by this Act.

1 **SEC. 416. TRANSPARENCY FOR DISASTER DECLARATIONS.**

2 Section 401 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief
3 and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170) is
4 amended by adding at the end the following:

5 “(d) **TRANSPARENCY FOR MAJOR DISASTER DEC-**
6 **LARATIONS.**—

7 “(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Upon issuing an approval
8 or denial of a major disaster requested by a Gov-
9 ernor of a State or the Chief Executive of an af-
10 fected Indian tribal government under this section,
11 the President shall provide to the Governor or Chief
12 Executive a detailed justification of such approval or
13 denial that includes—

14 “(A) an explanation of the determination
15 that the damage caused by the disaster did or
16 did not exceed the capacity of the State or In-
17 dian tribal government;

18 “(B) a consideration of loss of life and po-
19 tential continued threats to public safety;

20 “(C) the total value of the damage caused
21 by the disaster as estimated by the President,
22 in consultation with the Administrator and im-
23 pacted State or Indian tribal government, that
24 was used to make the disaster declaration de-
25 termination; and

1 “(D) how the President, in consultation
2 with the Administrator—

3 “(i) determined whether the disaster
4 impacted a rural or economically distressed
5 community or communities; and

6 “(ii) considered whether there was se-
7 vere local impact or were recent multiple
8 disasters in the impacted area.

9 “(2) APPLICABILITY.—This subsection shall not
10 apply in any case in which the President makes a
11 declaration under this section for a major disaster
12 that is requested through expedited procedures, in-
13 cluding pursuant to section 206.36(d) of title 44,
14 Code of Federal Regulations.”.

15 **SEC. 417. FAST-MOVING DISASTERS WORKING GROUP.**

16 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the
17 date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the
18 Federal Emergency Management Agency shall convene a
19 working group to review and develop best practices for
20 preparing for, mitigating against, public alerting, and re-
21 sponding to fast-moving disasters.

22 (b) MEMBERSHIP.—The working group established
23 under subsection (a) shall be composed of—

24 (1) representatives from the Federal Emergency
25 Management Agency;

1 (2) representatives from the United States
2 Coast Guard;

3 (3) representatives from the Department of De-
4 fense;

5 (4) representatives from the National Weather
6 Service of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric
7 Administration;

8 (5) representatives of States, Tribal govern-
9 ments, and units of local government; and

10 (6) subject matter experts in emergency man-
11 agement, public alerts and warnings, emergency
12 evacuations, and preparedness and response.

13 (c) BEST PRACTICES.—Not later than 1 year after
14 the convening of the working group pursuant to subsection
15 (a), the Administrator shall issue, and make publicly avail-
16 able, a report on—

17 (1) best practices to guide Federal, State, Trib-
18 al and local governments in preparing for, mitigating
19 against, public alerting, and responding to fast-mov-
20 ing disasters;

21 (2) proposed changes to plans and policies of
22 relevant Federal agencies to better assist in pre-
23 paring for, mitigating against, public alerting, and
24 responding to fast-moving disasters; and

1 (3) any needed legislative proposals that would
2 support preparing for, mitigating against, public
3 alerting, and responding to fast-moving disasters.

4 (d) **FAST-MOVING DISASTER DEFINED.**—In this sec-
5 tion, the term “fast-moving disaster” means an event that
6 develops or spreads rapidly, causing significant damage
7 and necessitating immediate response, including flash
8 flooding, wildfires, mudslides, and tornados.

9 **SEC. 418. PUBLIC ASSISTANCE DASHBOARD.**

10 Title IV of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and
11 Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170 et seq.) is fur-
12 ther amended by adding at the end the following:

13 **“SEC. 432. PUBLIC ASSISTANCE DASHBOARD.**

14 “For each major disaster that is declared by the
15 President under section 401 on or after the date that is
16 180 days after the date of enactment of the FEMA Act
17 of 2025, the Administrator shall, not later than 90 days
18 after such declaration, make publicly available on the
19 website of the Agency an interactive, publicly accessible
20 dashboard that tracks the following information with re-
21 spect to each such disaster:

22 “(1) Information on each cost estimate sub-
23 mitted under section 409, including information on
24 each applicant, date of each submission, descriptions
25 for each project, cost of each project with a break-

1 down of the Federal cost-share and non-Federal
2 cost-share.

3 “(2) Status of the Agency review and approval
4 of each cost estimate submitted pursuant to section
5 409, including the date a project is approved and
6 the date the grant is issued.

7 “(3) An explanation for any cost estimate that
8 is not approved or if the grant is not provided in the
9 timeline as required by section 409 and any correc-
10 tive action taken by the Agency to conform with the
11 requirements of section 409.

12 “(4) Project-level progress updates, consistent
13 with the reporting requirements established under
14 section 409.

15 “(5) Information on requests made under sec-
16 tion 801, including dates and amounts of each re-
17 quest, timelines for submissions of required informa-
18 tion, and dates of approval and disbursement of
19 funds.

20 “(6) Any other information the Administrator
21 determines to be appropriate to ensure transparency
22 and accountability in the administration of public
23 assistance.”.

1 **SEC. 419. IMPROVING DISASTER WORKFORCE RETENTION.**

2 (a) IMPROVING DISASTER WORKFORCE RETENTION
3 IN NONCONTIGUOUS COMMUNITIES.—

4 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the
5 Federal Emergency Management Agency shall con-
6 duct a study on the effectiveness of practices of the
7 Agency relating to hiring, recruitment, and retention
8 in noncontiguous communities by soliciting feedback
9 from staff in such communities.

10 (2) CONTENTS.—In conducting the study under
11 paragraph (1), the Administrator shall—

12 (A) evaluate the recruitment strategies of
13 the Agency and efforts of the Agency to broad-
14 en the pool of qualified local candidates;

15 (B) prioritize input from communities in
16 which there are the most severe staffing short-
17 ages; and

18 (C) identify specific steps that the Agency
19 can take to improve opportunities for staff in
20 noncontiguous communities.

21 (3) BRIEFING.—Not later than 6 months after
22 the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator
23 shall brief the Committee on Transportation and In-
24 frastructure and the Committee on Homeland Secu-
25 rity of the House of Representatives and the Com-
26 mittee on Homeland Security and Governmental Af-

1 fairs of the Senate on the results of the study con-
2 ducted under paragraph (1).

3 (4) POLICIES.—The Administrator shall take
4 such actions as are necessary to revise any policies,
5 guidance, or regulations of the Agency to address
6 the disaster workforce challenges in noncontiguous
7 communities identified in the study conducted under
8 paragraph (1).

9 (b) GAO REVIEW OF DISASTER RESPONSE AND RE-
10 COVERY IN NONCONTIGUOUS COMMUNITIES.—

11 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Comptroller General of
12 the United States shall conduct a study on the effec-
13 tiveness of disaster response and recovery practices
14 in noncontiguous communities, with a particular
15 focus on recovery efforts relating to damage caused
16 by Super Typhoon Yutu, and compare such practices
17 with the disaster response and recovery practices in
18 contiguous communities.

19 (2) CONTENTS.—In conducting the study under
20 paragraph (1), the Comptroller General shall—

21 (A) analyze ongoing recovery efforts from
22 disasters that have impacted noncontiguous
23 communities;

1 (B) analyze the level of coordination be-
2 tween the Federal Departments and Agencies
3 tasked with disaster response and recovery;

4 (C) assess how effectively Federal agencies
5 coordinate with State emergency management
6 offices;

7 (D) assess the effectiveness of the Area of-
8 fices and Regional Advisory Councils of the
9 Agency in assisting noncontiguous communities;
10 and

11 (E) make recommendations on how to im-
12 prove the disaster response and recovery out-
13 comes in noncontiguous communities.

14 (3) REPORT.—Not later than 18 months after
15 the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller
16 General shall submit to the Committee on Transpor-
17 tation and Infrastructure and the Committee on
18 Homeland Security of the House of Representatives
19 and the Committee on Homeland Security and Gov-
20 ernmental Affairs of the Senate a report on the
21 study conducted under paragraph (1).

22 (c) PRELIMINARY DAMAGE ASSESSMENT PILOT PRO-
23 GRAM.—

24 (1) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 1 year
25 after the date of enactment of this Act, the Adminis-

1 trator of the Federal Emergency Management Agen-
2 cy shall establish a pilot program to implement new
3 technology in carrying out a preliminary damage as-
4 sessment in a noncontiguous community in which a
5 major disaster has been declared under section 401
6 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emer-
7 gency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170).

8 (2) PRIORITY.—In carrying out the pilot pro-
9 gram established under paragraph (1), the Adminis-
10 trator shall ensure that the most geographically re-
11 mote noncontiguous communities are prioritized.

12 (3) BRIEFING.—Not later than 3 years after
13 the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator
14 shall brief the Committee on Transportation and In-
15 frastructure and the Committee on Homeland Secu-
16 rity of the House of Representatives and the Com-
17 mittee on Homeland Security and Governmental Af-
18 fairs of the Senate on the implementation of the
19 pilot program established under paragraph (1).

20 (4) SUNSET.—The pilot program established
21 under paragraph (1) shall terminate on September
22 30, 2030.

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