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117TH CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

H. R. 7211

[Report No. 117-]

To amend the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, review a final rule of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 24, 2022

Mr. KATKO (for himself, Ms. TITUS, Mr. PAPPAS, Mr. DELGADO, Mr. GIMENEZ, and Mr. GUEST) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

MAY --, 2022

Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union,
and ordered to be printed

A BILL

To amend the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, review a final rule of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, 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.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Small State and Rural
5 Rescue Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. DESIGNATION OF SMALL STATE AND RURAL ADVOCATE.**
7 **CATE.**

8 Section 326(c) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Re-
9 lief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5165d) is
10 amended—

11 (1) by striking “and” at the end of paragraph
12 (2);

13 (2) by redesignating paragraph (3) as para-
14 graph (4); and

15 (3) by inserting after paragraph (2) the fol-
16 lowing:

17 “(3) assist States in the collection and presen-
18 tation of material in the disaster or emergency dec-
19 laration request relevant to demonstrate severe local-
20 ized impacts within the State for a specific incident,
21 including—

22 “(A) the per capita personal income by
23 local area, as calculated by the Bureau of Eco-
24 nomic Analysis;

1 “(B) the disaster impacted population pro-
2 file, as reported by the Bureau of the Census,
3 including—

4 “(i) the percentage of the population
5 for whom poverty status is determined;

6 “(ii) the percentage of the population
7 already receiving Government assistance
8 such as Supplemental Security Income and
9 Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Pro-
10 gram benefits;

11 “(iii) the pre-disaster unemployment
12 rate;

13 “(iv) the percentage of the population
14 that is 65 years old and older;

15 “(v) the percentage of the population
16 18 years old and younger;

17 “(vi) the percentage of the population
18 with a disability;

19 “(vii) the percentage of the population
20 who speak a language other than English
21 and speak English less than ‘very well’;
22 and

23 “(viii) any unique considerations re-
24 garding American Indian and Alaskan Na-
25 tive Tribal populations raised in the

1 State’s request for a major disaster dec-
2 laration that may not be reflected in the
3 data points referenced in this subpara-
4 graph;

5 “(C) the impact to community infrastruc-
6 ture, including—

7 “(i) disruptions to community life-sav-
8 ing and life-sustaining services;

9 “(ii) disruptions or increased demand
10 for essential community services; and

11 “(iii) disruptions to transportation, in-
12 frastructure, and utilities; and

13 “(D) any other information relevant to
14 demonstrate severe local impacts.”.

15 **SEC. 3. GAO REVIEW OF A FINAL RULE.**

16 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Comptroller General shall
17 conduct a review of the Federal Emergency Management
18 Agency’s implementation of its final rule, published on
19 March 21, 2019, amending section 206.48(b) of title 44,
20 Code of Federal Regulations (regarding factors considered
21 when evaluating a Governor’s request for a major disaster
22 declaration), which revised the factors that the Agency
23 considers when evaluating a Governor’s request for a
24 major disaster declaration authorizing individual assist-

1 ance under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and
2 Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq).

3 (b) SCOPE.—The review required under subsection
4 (a) shall include the following:

5 (1) An assessment of the criteria used by the
6 Agency to assess individual assistance requests fol-
7 lowing a major disaster declaration authorizing indi-
8 vidual assistance.

9 (2) An assessment of the consistency with
10 which the Agency uses the updated Individual As-
11 sistance Declaration Factors when assessing the im-
12 pact of individual communities after a major dis-
13 aster declaration.

14 (3) An assessment of the impact, if any, of
15 using the updated Individual Assistance Declaration
16 Factors has had on equity in disaster recovery out-
17 comes.

18 (4) Recommendations to improve the use of the
19 Individual Assistance Declaration Factors to in-
20 crease equity in disaster recovery outcomes.

21 (c) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date
22 of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall
23 submit to the Committee on Transportation and Infra-
24 structure of the House of Representatives and the Com-
25 mittee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

1 of the Senate a report on the review required under this
2 section.