

Suspend the Rules and Pass the Bill, H.R. 5774, With an Amendment

(The amendment strikes all after the enacting clause and inserts a new text)

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 5774

To amend the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to ensure that unmet needs after a major disaster are met.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

OCTOBER 28, 2021

Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana (for himself and Ms. PLASKETT) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

A BILL

To amend the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to ensure that unmet needs after a major disaster are met.

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 “Expediting Disaster
5 Recovery Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. UNMET NEED ASSISTANCE.**

2 (a) IN GENERAL.—Title IV of the Robert T. Stafford
3 Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act is amended
4 by adding at the end the following:

5 **“SEC. 431. UNMET NEEDS ASSISTANCE.**

6 “(a) IN GENERAL.—After the declaration of a major
7 disaster, the President may direct the Administrator of
8 the Federal Emergency Management Agency to provide to
9 the State, subject to amounts made available from appro-
10 priations, assistance necessary for meeting unmet needs
11 as a result of such disaster.

12 “(b) FUNDING.—

13 “(1) AMOUNT OF FUNDING.—Subject to appro-
14 priations and not later than 30 days after a declara-
15 tion is made under section 401, the President acting
16 through the Administrator may allocate an amount
17 that equals up to 10 percent of the estimated aggre-
18 gate amount of the grants to be made pursuant to
19 sections 406 and 408 for the major disaster in order
20 to provide technical and financial assistance under
21 this section and such set aside shall be deemed to
22 be related to activities carried out pursuant to major
23 disasters under this Act.

24 “(2) ESTIMATED AGGREGATE AMOUNT.—Not
25 later than 180 days after each major disaster dec-
26 laration pursuant to this Act, the estimated aggre-

1 gate amount of grants for purposes of paragraph (1)
2 shall be determined by the President and such esti-
3 mated amount need not be reduced, increased, or
4 changed due to variations in estimates.

5 “(3) NO REDUCTION IN AMOUNTS.—The
6 amount set aside pursuant to paragraph (1) shall
7 not reduce the amounts otherwise made available for
8 sections 403, 404, 406, 407, 408, 410, 416, and 428
9 under this Act.

10 “(c) UNMET NEEDS.—Financial assistance provided
11 under this section may be used to provide assistance, in
12 addition to other amounts made available under this Act,
13 for the following unmet needs:

14 “(1) Disaster-related home repair and rebuild-
15 ing assistance to families for permanent housing
16 purposes, including in conjunction with eligible ex-
17 penditures under section 408.

18 “(2) Disaster-related unmet needs of families
19 who are unable to obtain adequate assistance from
20 other sources.

21 “(3) Other services that alleviate human suf-
22 fering and promote the well-being of disaster vic-
23 tims.

24 “(4) Economic and business activities (includ-
25 ing food and agriculture) after a disaster to imple-

1 ment post-disaster economic recovery measures, in-
2 cluding planning and technical assistance for long-
3 term economic recovery plans, infrastructure im-
4 provements, business or infrastructure financing,
5 market or industry research, and other activities au-
6 thorized under a comprehensive economic develop-
7 ment strategy.

8 “(d) ACCOUNTING AND FISCAL CONTROLS.—

9 “(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 6 months
10 after receipt of funds and every 6 months thereafter
11 until all such funds are expended, a State shall sub-
12 mit a report to the Administrator that includes—

13 “(A) the criteria established for deter-
14 mining how the funds are spent;

15 “(B) the allocation of those funds; and

16 “(C) the process for public notice and com-
17 ment.

18 “(2) COMPLIANCE.—Any individual who re-
19 ceives assistance pursuant to this section shall com-
20 ply with section 312(b).

21 “(3) ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS.—A State that re-
22 ceives funds under this section may expend not more
23 than 5 percent of the amount of such funds for the
24 administrative costs of providing financial assistance
25 to individuals and households in the State.”.

1 (b) APPLICABILITY.—This section and the amend-
2 ments made by this section shall apply to funds appro-
3 priated on or after the date of enactment of this Act.

4 **SEC. 3. REPAIR AND REBUILDING.**

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

8 (1) in paragraph (2)—

9 (A) in subparagraph (A)(i) by striking “to
10 a safe and sanitary living or functioning condi-
11 tion”;

12 (B) in subparagraph (B) by striking “A
13 recipient of” and inserting “(i) EVIDENCE OF
14 OTHER MEANS OF ASSISTANCE.—A recipient
15 of”;

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

17 “(ii) COORDINATION WITH OTHER ASSIST-
18 ANCE.—Assistance allowed under this para-
19 graph may be used in coordination with other
20 sources for the repair and rebuilding of an
21 owner-occupied residence.”; and

22 (2) in paragraph (4) by striking “in cases in
23 which” and all that follows through the end of the
24 paragraph and inserting “if the President considers
25 it a cost effective alternative to other housing solu-

1 tions, including the costs associated with temporary
2 housing provided under this section, and long-term
3 rebuilding costs associated with section 431.”.

4 (b) **APPLICABILITY.**—This section and the amend-
5 ments made by this section shall apply to funds appro-
6 priated on or after the date of enactment of this Act.

7 **SEC. 4. REVIEW BY COMPTROLLER GENERAL.**

8 Not later than 5 years after the date of enactment
9 of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States
10 shall conduct a review on the fiscal controls by States that
11 receive funds under section 431 of the Robert T. Stafford
12 Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act and shall
13 make recommendations to the Committee on Homeland
14 Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate and the
15 Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the
16 House of Representatives.

17 **SEC. 5. DUPLICATION OF BENEFITS.**

18 Section 312(b)(4) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster
19 Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C.
20 5155(b)(4)) is amended by adding at the end the fol-
21 lowing:

22 “(D) **LIMITATION ON USE OF INCOME CRI-**
23 **TERIA.**—In carrying out subparagraph (A), the
24 President may not impose additional income
25 criteria on a potential grant recipient who has

1 accepted a qualified disaster loan in deter-
2 mining eligibility for duplications of benefit re-
3 lief.”.