

114TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 1471

To reauthorize the programs and activities of the Federal Emergency  
Management Agency.

---

## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 19, 2015

Mr. BARLETTA (for himself, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. SHUSTER, and Mr. DEFAZIO) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

---

## A BILL

To reauthorize the programs and activities of the Federal  
Emergency Management Agency.

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 “FEMA Disaster Assistance Reform Act of 2015”.

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

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

### TITLE I—FEMA REAUTHORIZATION

Sec. 101. Reauthorization of Federal Emergency Management Agency.

TITLE II—COMPREHENSIVE STUDY OF DISASTER COSTS AND  
LOSSES

Sec. 201. Comprehensive study of disaster costs and losses.

TITLE III—STAFFORD ACT AND OTHER PROGRAMS

Sec. 301. Reauthorization of urban search and rescue response system.

Sec. 302. Reauthorization of emergency management assistance compact grants.

Sec. 303. Physical testing standards for electric utility facilities.

Sec. 304. Nonprofit facilities.

Sec. 305. Statute of limitations.

Sec. 306. Action plan to improve field transition.

Sec. 307. Simplified procedures.

Sec. 308. Management costs.

Sec. 309. Debts owed to the United States related to disaster assistance.

Sec. 310. Statute of limitations for debts owed to the United States related to disaster assistance.

TITLE IV—WILDFIRE PREVENTION AND MITIGATION

Sec. 401. Wildfire mitigation assistance.

Sec. 402. Additional activities.

# TITLE I—FEMA REAUTHORIZATION

## SEC. 101. REAUTHORIZATION OF FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY.

Section 699 of the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006 (Public Law 109–295; 6 U.S.C. 811) is amended—

(1) by striking “administration and operations” each place it appears and inserting “management and administration”; and

(2) in paragraph (2), by striking “; and”;

(3) in paragraph (3), by striking the period and inserting “; and”; and

(4) by adding at the end the following:

“(4) for fiscal year 2016, \$946,982,000;

1 “(5) for fiscal year 2017, \$946,982,000; and

2 “(6) for fiscal year 2018, \$946,982,000.”.

3 **TITLE II—COMPREHENSIVE**  
4 **STUDY OF DISASTER COSTS**  
5 **AND LOSSES**

6 **SEC. 201. COMPREHENSIVE STUDY OF DISASTER COSTS**  
7 **AND LOSSES.**

8 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 30 days after  
9 the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of  
10 the Federal Emergency Management Agency shall com-  
11 mence, through the National Advisory Council, a com-  
12 prehensive study related to disaster costs and losses (re-  
13 ferred to in the subsection as the “Study”).

14 (b) ADDITIONAL MEMBERSHIP.—For the purposes of  
15 the Study, as soon as practicable after the date of enact-  
16 ment of this section, the Administrator shall appoint addi-  
17 tional qualified members to the National Advisory Council  
18 from the following:

19 (1) Individuals that have the requisite technical  
20 knowledge and expertise on issues related to disaster  
21 costs and losses.

22 (2) Representatives of the insurance industry.

23 (3) Experts in and representatives of the con-  
24 struction and building industry.

1           (4) Individuals nominated by national organiza-  
2           tions representing local governments and personnel.

3           (5) Academic experts.

4           (6) Vendors, developers, and manufacturers of  
5           systems, facilities, equipment, and capabilities for  
6           emergency management services.

7           (7) Representatives of such other stakeholders  
8           and interested and affected parties as the Adminis-  
9           trator considers appropriate.

10          (c) CONSULTATION WITH NONMEMBERS.—The Na-  
11          tional Advisory Council shall consult with other relevant  
12          agencies and groups that are not represented on the Na-  
13          tional Advisory Council to consider research, data, find-  
14          ings, recommendations, innovative technologies and devel-  
15          opments, including—

16                (1) entities engaged in federally funded re-  
17                search; and

18                (2) academic institutions engaged in relevant  
19                work and research.

20          (d) RECOMMENDATIONS.—Not later than 120 days  
21          after the date of enactment of this Act, the National Advi-  
22          sory Council shall convene to evaluate the following topics  
23          and develop recommendations for reducing disaster costs  
24          and losses:

25                (1) DISASTER LOSSES.—

1 (A) COST TRENDS.—Trends in disaster  
2 costs including loss of life and injury, property  
3 damage to individuals, the private sector, and  
4 each level of government (State, local and trib-  
5 al) since the enactment of the Robert T. Staf-  
6 ford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance  
7 Act (42 U.S.C. 5141 et seq.), to the extent data  
8 is available.

9 (B) CONTRIBUTING FACTORS.—Contrib-  
10 uting factors such as shifting demographics and  
11 aging infrastructure and their impacts on the  
12 trends in disaster losses and costs.

13 (2) DISASTER COSTS.—

14 (A) TRENDS IN DECLARATIONS.—Trends  
15 in disaster declarations, including factors con-  
16 tributing to the trends.

17 (B) DISASTER ASSISTANCE.—Disaster as-  
18 sistance available from all Federal sources, in-  
19 cluding descriptions of programs, eligibility and  
20 authorities, where assistance has been used geo-  
21 graphically, how quickly the funds are used,  
22 how that assistance is coordinated among the  
23 various agencies and departments, and rec-  
24 ommendations for ways to improve the effec-

1           tiveness and efficiency of the delivery of such  
2           assistance.

3           (C) COSTS.—Disaster costs borne by the  
4           private sector and individuals.

5           (3) DISASTER ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITY.—  
6           Fundamental principles that should drive national  
7           disaster assistance decision making, including the  
8           appropriate roles for each level of government, the  
9           private sector and individuals.

10          (4) REDUCTION OF COSTS AND LOSSES.—

11          (A) MECHANISMS AND INCENTIVES.—  
12          Mechanisms and incentives to promote disaster  
13          cost reduction and mitigation, including cost  
14          data, projections for the return on investment,  
15          and measures of effectiveness.

16          (B) IDENTIFICATION OF CHALLENGES.—  
17          Identify fundamental legal, societal, geographic  
18          and technological challenges to implementation.

19          (5) LEGISLATIVE PROPOSALS.—Legislative pro-  
20          posals for implementing the recommendations in the  
21          report compiled pursuant to the requirement in sec-  
22          tion 1111 of the Sandy Recovery Improvement Act  
23          of 2013 (Public Law 113–2).

24          (e) REPORT TO ADMINISTRATOR AND CONGRESS.—

25          Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this

1 section, the National Advisory Council shall submit a re-  
 2 port containing the data, analysis, and recommendations  
 3 developed under subsection (d) to—

4 (1) the Administrator of the Federal Emer-  
 5 gency Management Agency;

6 (2) the Committee on Transportation and In-  
 7 frastructure of the House of Representatives; and

8 (3) the Committee on Homeland Security and  
 9 Governmental Affairs of the Senate.

## 10 **TITLE III—STAFFORD ACT AND** 11 **OTHER PROGRAMS**

### 12 **SEC. 301. REAUTHORIZATION OF URBAN SEARCH AND RES-** 13 **CUE RESPONSE SYSTEM.**

14 (a) IN GENERAL.—Title III of the Robert T. Stafford  
 15 Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C.  
 16 5141 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the fol-  
 17 lowing:

### 18 **“SEC. 327. NATIONAL URBAN SEARCH AND RESCUE RE-** 19 **SPONSE SYSTEM.**

20 “(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section, the following  
 21 definitions apply:

22 “(1) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term ‘Adminis-  
 23 trator’ means the Administrator of the Federal  
 24 Emergency Management Agency.

1           “(2) AGENCY.—The term ‘Agency’ means the  
2       Federal Emergency Management Agency.

3           “(3) HAZARD.—The term ‘hazard’ has the  
4       meaning given that term by section 602.

5           “(4) NONEMPLOYEE SYSTEM MEMBER.—The  
6       term ‘nonemployee System member’ means a System  
7       member not employed by a sponsoring agency or  
8       participating agency.

9           “(5) PARTICIPATING AGENCY.—The term ‘par-  
10      ticipating agency’ means a State or local govern-  
11      ment, nonprofit organization, or private organization  
12      that has executed an agreement with a sponsoring  
13      agency to participate in the System.

14          “(6) SPONSORING AGENCY.—The term ‘spon-  
15      soring agency’ means a State or local government  
16      that is the sponsor of a task force designated by the  
17      Administrator to participate in the System.

18          “(7) SYSTEM.—The term ‘System’ means the  
19      National Urban Search and Rescue Response Sys-  
20      tem to be administered under this section.

21          “(8) SYSTEM MEMBER.—The term ‘System  
22      member’ means an individual who is not a full-time  
23      employee of the Federal Government and who serves  
24      on a task force or on a System management or other  
25      technical team.

1           “(9) TASK FORCE.—The term ‘task force’  
2       means an urban search and rescue team designated  
3       by the Administrator to participate in the System.

4       “(b) GENERAL AUTHORITY.—Subject to the require-  
5       ments of this section, the Administrator shall continue to  
6       administer the emergency response system known as the  
7       National Urban Search and Rescue Response System.

8       “(c) FUNCTIONS.—In administering the System, the  
9       Administrator shall provide for a national network of  
10      standardized search and rescue resources to assist States  
11      and local governments in responding to hazards.

12      “(d) TASK FORCES.—

13           “(1) DESIGNATION.—The Administrator shall  
14      designate task forces to participate in the System.  
15      The Administration shall determine the criteria for  
16      such participation.

17           “(2) SPONSORING AGENCIES.—Each task force  
18      shall have a sponsoring agency. The Administrator  
19      shall enter into an agreement with the sponsoring  
20      agency with respect to the participation of each task  
21      force in the System.

22           “(3) COMPOSITION.—

23           “(A) PARTICIPATING AGENCIES.—A task  
24      force may include, at the discretion of the spon-  
25      soring agency, one or more participating agen-

1           cies. The sponsoring agency shall enter into an  
2           agreement with each participating agency with  
3           respect to the participation of the participating  
4           agency on the task force.

5           “(B) OTHER INDIVIDUALS.—A task force  
6           may also include, at the discretion of the spon-  
7           soring agency, other individuals not otherwise  
8           associated with the sponsoring agency or a par-  
9           ticipating agency. The sponsoring agency of a  
10          task force may enter into a separate agreement  
11          with each such individual with respect to the  
12          participation of the individual on the task force.

13          “(e) MANAGEMENT AND TECHNICAL TEAMS.—The  
14          Administrator shall maintain such management teams and  
15          other technical teams as the Administrator determines are  
16          necessary to administer the System.

17          “(f) APPOINTMENT OF SYSTEM MEMBERS INTO  
18          FEDERAL SERVICE.—

19                 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator may ap-  
20          point a System member into Federal service for a  
21          period of service to provide for the participation of  
22          the System member in exercises, preincident staging,  
23          major disaster and emergency response activities,  
24          and training events sponsored or sanctioned by the  
25          Administrator.

1           “(2) NONAPPLICABILITY OF CERTAIN CIVIL  
2       SERVICE LAWS.—The Administrator may make ap-  
3       pointments under paragraph (1) without regard to  
4       the provisions of title 5, United States Code, gov-  
5       erning appointments in the competitive service.

6           “(3) RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER AUTHORI-  
7       TIES.—The authority of the Administrator to make  
8       appointments under this subsection shall not affect  
9       any other authority of the Administrator under this  
10      Act.

11          “(4) LIMITATION.—A System member who is  
12      appointed into Federal service under paragraph (1)  
13      shall not be considered an employee of the United  
14      States for purposes other than those specifically set  
15      forth in this section.

16          “(g) COMPENSATION.—

17              “(1) PAY OF SYSTEM MEMBERS.—Subject to  
18      such terms and conditions as the Administrator may  
19      impose by regulation, the Administrator shall make  
20      payments to the sponsoring agency of a task force—

21                  “(A) to reimburse each employer of a Sys-  
22      tem member on the task force for compensation  
23      paid by the employer to the System member for  
24      any period during which the System member is

1 appointed into Federal service under subsection  
2 (f)(1); and

3 “(B) to make payments directly to a non-  
4 employee System member on the task force for  
5 any period during which the non-employee Sys-  
6 tem member is appointed into Federal service  
7 under subsection (f)(1).

8 “(2) REIMBURSEMENT FOR EMPLOYEES FILL-  
9 ING POSITIONS OF SYSTEM MEMBERS.—

10 “(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to such terms  
11 and conditions as the Administrator may im-  
12 pose by regulation, the Administrator shall  
13 make payments to the sponsoring agency of a  
14 task force to reimburse each employer of a Sys-  
15 tem member on the task force for compensation  
16 paid by the employer to an employee filling a  
17 position normally filled by the System member  
18 for any period during which the System mem-  
19 ber is appointed into Federal service under sub-  
20 section (f)(1).

21 “(B) LIMITATION.—Costs incurred by an  
22 employer shall be eligible for reimbursement  
23 under subparagraph (A) only to the extent that  
24 the costs are in excess of the costs that would  
25 have been incurred by the employer had the

1           System member not been appointed into Fed-  
2           eral service under subsection (f)(1).

3           “(3) METHOD OF PAYMENT.—A System mem-  
4           ber shall not be entitled to pay directly from the  
5           Agency for a period during which the System mem-  
6           ber is appointed into Federal service under sub-  
7           section (f)(1).

8           “(h) PERSONAL INJURY, ILLNESS, DISABILITY, OR  
9           DEATH.—

10           “(1) IN GENERAL.—A System member who is  
11           appointed into Federal service under subsection  
12           (f)(1) and who suffers personal injury, illness, dis-  
13           ability, or death as a result of a personal injury sus-  
14           tained while acting in the scope of such appointment  
15           shall, for the purposes of subchapter I of chapter 81  
16           of title 5, United States Code, be treated as though  
17           the member were an employee (as defined by section  
18           8101 of that title) who had sustained the injury in  
19           the performance of duty.

20           “(2) ELECTION OF BENEFITS.—

21           “(A) IN GENERAL.—If a System member  
22           (or, in the case of the death of the System  
23           member, the System member’s dependent) is  
24           entitled—

1 “(i) under paragraph (1) to receive  
2 benefits under subchapter I of chapter 81  
3 of title 5, United States Code, by reason of  
4 personal injury, illness, disability, or death,  
5 and

6 “(ii) to receive benefits from a State  
7 or local government by reason of the same  
8 personal injury, illness, disability, or death,  
9 the System member or dependent shall elect to  
10 receive either the benefits referred to in clause  
11 (i) or (ii).

12 “(B) DEADLINE.—A System member or  
13 dependent shall make an election of benefits  
14 under subparagraph (A) not later than 1 year  
15 after the date of the personal injury, illness,  
16 disability, or death that is the reason for the  
17 benefits or until such later date as the Sec-  
18 retary of Labor may allow for reasonable cause  
19 shown.

20 “(C) EFFECT OF ELECTION.—An election  
21 of benefits made under this paragraph is irrev-  
22 ocable unless otherwise provided by law.

23 “(3) REIMBURSEMENT FOR STATE OR LOCAL  
24 BENEFITS.—Subject to such terms and conditions as  
25 the Administrator may impose by regulation, in the

1 event that a System member or dependent elects  
2 benefits from a State or local government under  
3 paragraph (2)(A), the Administrator shall reimburse  
4 the State or local government for the value of those  
5 benefits.

6 “(i) LIABILITY.—A System member appointed into  
7 Federal service under subsection (f)(1), while acting with-  
8 in the scope of the appointment, is deemed an employee  
9 of the Federal Government under section 1346(b) of title  
10 28, United States Code, and chapter 171 of that title, re-  
11 lating to tort claims procedure.

12 “(j) EMPLOYMENT AND REEMPLOYMENT RIGHTS.—  
13 With respect to a System member who is not a regular  
14 full-time employee of a sponsoring agency or participating  
15 agency, the following terms and conditions apply:

16 “(1) SERVICE.—Service as a System member is  
17 deemed ‘service in the uniformed services’ for pur-  
18 poses of chapter 43 of title 38, United States Code,  
19 relating to employment and reemployment rights of  
20 individuals who have performed service in the uni-  
21 formed services (regardless of whether the individual  
22 receives compensation for such participation). All  
23 rights and obligations of such persons and proce-  
24 dures for assistance, enforcement, and investigation  
25 shall be as provided for in such chapter.

1           “(2) PRECLUSION.—Preclusion of giving notice  
2           of service by necessity of appointment under this  
3           section is deemed preclusion by ‘military necessity’  
4           for purposes of section 4312(b) of title 38, United  
5           States Code, pertaining to giving notice of absence  
6           from a position of employment. A determination of  
7           such necessity shall be made by the Administrator  
8           and shall not be subject to judicial review.

9           “(k) LICENSES AND PERMITS.—If a System member  
10          holds a valid license, certificate, or other permit issued by  
11          any State or other governmental jurisdiction evidencing  
12          the member’s qualifications in any professional, mechan-  
13          ical, or other skill or type of assistance required by the  
14          System, the System member is deemed to be performing  
15          a Federal activity when rendering aid involving such skill  
16          or assistance during a period of appointment into Federal  
17          service under subsection (f)(1).

18          “(l) ADVISORY COMMITTEE.—

19                 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall es-  
20                 tablish and maintain an advisory committee to pro-  
21                 vide expert recommendations to the Administrator in  
22                 order to assist the Administrator in administering  
23                 the System.

1           “(2) COMPOSITION.—The advisory committee  
2       shall be composed of members from geographically  
3       diverse areas, and shall include—

4           “(A) the chief officer or senior executive  
5       from at least three sponsoring agencies;

6           “(B) the senior emergency manager from  
7       at least two States that include sponsoring  
8       agencies; and

9           “(C) at least one representative rec-  
10      ommended by the leaders of the task forces.

11          “(3) INAPPLICABILITY OF TERMINATION RE-  
12      QUIREMENT.—Section 14(a)(2) of the Federal Advi-  
13      sory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) shall not apply  
14      to the advisory committee under this subsection.

15          “(m) PREPAREDNESS COOPERATIVE AGREE-  
16      MENTS.—

17          “(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to the availability  
18      of appropriations for such purpose, the Adminis-  
19      trator shall enter into an annual preparedness coop-  
20      erative agreement with each sponsoring agency.  
21      Amounts made available to a sponsoring agency  
22      under such a preparedness cooperative agreement  
23      shall be for the following purposes:

1           “(A) Training and exercises, including  
2           training and exercises with other Federal,  
3           State, and local government response entities.

4           “(B) Acquisition and maintenance of  
5           equipment, including interoperable communica-  
6           tions and personal protective equipment.

7           “(C) Medical monitoring required for re-  
8           sponder safety and health in anticipation of and  
9           following a major disaster, emergency, or other  
10          hazard, as determined by the Administrator.

11          “(2) AVAILABILITY OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Not-  
12          withstanding section 1552(b) of title 31, United  
13          States Code, amounts made available for cooperative  
14          agreements under this subsection that are not ex-  
15          pended shall be deposited in an agency account and  
16          shall remain available for such agreements without  
17          fiscal year limitation.

18          “(n) RESPONSE COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS.—The  
19          Administrator shall enter into a response cooperative  
20          agreement with each sponsoring agency, as appropriate,  
21          under which the Administrator agrees to reimburse the  
22          sponsoring agency for costs incurred by the sponsoring  
23          agency in responding to a major disaster or emergency.

1       “(o) OBLIGATIONS.—The Administrator may incur  
 2 all necessary obligations consistent with this section in  
 3 order to ensure the effectiveness of the System.

4       “(p) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

5           “(1) IN GENERAL.—There is authorized to be  
 6 appropriated to carry out the System and the provi-  
 7 sions of this section \$35,180,000 for each of fiscal  
 8 years 2016, 2017, and 2018.

9           “(2) ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.—The Ad-  
 10 ministrator may use not to exceed 6 percent of the  
 11 funds appropriated for a fiscal year pursuant to  
 12 paragraph (1) for salaries, expenses, and other ad-  
 13 ministrative costs incurred by the Administrator in  
 14 carrying out this section.”.

15       (b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

16           (1) APPLICABILITY OF TITLE 5, UNITED  
 17 STATES CODE.—Section 8101(1) of title 5, United  
 18 States Code, is amended—

19                   (A) in subparagraph (D) by striking “and”  
 20 at the end;

21                   (B) by moving subparagraph (F) to appear  
 22 after subparagraph (E);

23                   (C) in subparagraph (F)—

24                           (i) by striking “United States Code,”;

25                           and

1 (ii) by adding “and” at the end; and

2 (D) by inserting after subparagraph (F)

3 the following:

4 “(G) an individual who is a System mem-  
5 ber of the National Urban Search and Rescue  
6 Response System during a period of appoint-  
7 ment into Federal service pursuant to section  
8 327 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief  
9 and Emergency Assistance Act;”.

10 (2) INCLUSION AS PART OF UNIFORMED SERV-  
11 ICES FOR PURPOSES OF USERRA.—Section 4303 of  
12 title 38, United States Code, is amended—

13 (A) in paragraph (13) by inserting “, a pe-  
14 riod for which a System member of the Na-  
15 tional Urban Search and Rescue Response Sys-  
16 tem is absent from a position of employment  
17 due to an appointment into Federal service  
18 under section 327 of the Robert T. Stafford  
19 Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act”  
20 before “, and a period”; and

21 (B) in paragraph (16) by inserting after  
22 “Public Health Service,” the following: “System  
23 members of the National Urban Search and  
24 Rescue Response System during a period of ap-  
25 pointment into Federal service under section

1           327 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief  
2           and Emergency Assistance Act,”.

3 **SEC. 302. REAUTHORIZATION OF EMERGENCY MANAGE-**  
4 **MENT ASSISTANCE COMPACT GRANTS.**

5           (a) IN GENERAL.—Subtitle A of title VI of the Rob-  
6 ert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance  
7 Act (42 U.S.C. 5196 et seq.) is amended by adding at  
8 the end the following:

9 **“SEC. 617. EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE COM-**  
10 **PACT GRANTS.**

11           “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the Fed-  
12 eral Emergency Management Agency may make grants to  
13 provide for implementation of the Emergency Manage-  
14 ment Assistance Compact consented to by Congress in the  
15 joint resolution entitled ‘Joint resolution granting the con-  
16 sent of Congress to the Emergency Management Assist-  
17 ance Compact’ (Public Law 104–321; 110 Stat. 3877).

18           “(b) ELIGIBLE GRANT RECIPIENTS.—States and the  
19 Administrator of the Emergency Management Assistance  
20 Compact shall be eligible to receive grants under sub-  
21 section (a).

22           “(c) USE OF FUNDS.—A grant received under this  
23 section shall be used—

24                   “(1) to carry out recommendations identified in  
25           the Emergency Management Assistance Compact

1 after-action reports for the 2004 and 2005 hurricane  
2 seasons;

3 “(2) to administer compact operations on behalf  
4 of States, as such term is defined in the compact,  
5 that have enacted the compact;

6 “(3) to continue coordination with the Federal  
7 Emergency Management Agency and appropriate  
8 Federal agencies;

9 “(4) to continue coordination with States and  
10 local governments and their respective national orga-  
11 nizations; and

12 “(5) to assist State and local governments,  
13 emergency response providers, and organizations  
14 representing such providers with credentialing the  
15 providers and the typing of emergency response re-  
16 sources.

17 “(d) COORDINATION.—The Administrator of the  
18 Federal Emergency Management Agency shall consult  
19 with the Administrator of the Emergency Management  
20 Assistance Compact to ensure effective coordination of ef-  
21 forts in responding to requests for assistance.

22 “(e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There  
23 is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section  
24 \$2,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2016, 2017, and  
25 2018. Such sums shall remain available until expended.”.

1 (b) REPEAL.—Section 661 of the Post-Katrina  
2 Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006 (Public Law  
3 109–295; 6 U.S.C. 761) is repealed.

4 **SEC. 303. PHYSICAL TESTING STANDARDS FOR ELECTRIC**  
5 **UTILITY FACILITIES.**

6 (a) STUDY.—The Administrator of the Federal  
7 Emergency Management Agency shall conduct a study to  
8 compare the differences between—

9 (1) the physical testing standards that the Ad-  
10 ministrator applies with respect to electric utility fa-  
11 cilities as a condition for Federal assistance; and

12 (2) the physical testing standards that are ap-  
13 plied to electric utility facilities by the electric utili-  
14 ties industry and by the Rural Utilities Service of  
15 the Department of Agriculture.

16 (b) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date  
17 of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit  
18 to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure  
19 of the House of Representatives and the Committee on  
20 Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee  
21 of the Senate a report on the results of the study.

22 (c) FUNDING.—The Administrator shall carry out  
23 this section using funds available to the Administrator for  
24 management and expenses.

1 **SEC. 304. NONPROFIT FACILITIES.**

2 (a) DEFINITION OF PRIVATE NONPROFIT FACIL-  
3 ITY.—Section 102(11)(B) of the Robert T. Stafford Dis-  
4 aster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C.  
5 5122(11)(B)) is amended to read as follows:

6 “(B) ADDITIONAL FACILITIES.—In addi-  
7 tion to the facilities described in subparagraph  
8 (A), the term ‘private nonprofit facility’ in-  
9 cludes any private nonprofit facility that pro-  
10 vides essential services of a governmental na-  
11 ture to the general public (including museums,  
12 zoos, performing arts facilities, community arts  
13 centers, libraries, homeless shelters, senior cit-  
14 izen centers, rehabilitation facilities, shelter  
15 workshops, public broadcasting facilities, and  
16 facilities that provide health and safety services  
17 of a governmental nature), as defined by the  
18 President.”.

19 (b) REPAIR, RESTORATION, AND REPLACEMENT OF  
20 DAMAGED FACILITIES.—Section 406(a)(3)(B) of the Rob-  
21 ert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance  
22 Act (42 U.S.C. 5172(a)(3)) is amended by striking “com-  
23 munications,” and inserting “communications (including  
24 public broadcasting),”.

1 **SEC. 305. STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS.**

2 Section 705(a)(1) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster  
3 Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5205)  
4 is amended—

5 (1) by striking “Except” and inserting “Not-  
6 withstanding section 3716(e) of title 31, United  
7 States Code, and except”; and

8 (2) by striking “disaster or emergency” and in-  
9 serting “project completion as certified by the grant-  
10 ee”.

11 **SEC. 306. ACTION PLAN TO IMPROVE FIELD TRANSITION.**

12 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the  
13 date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the  
14 Federal Emergency Management Agency shall report to  
15 the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of  
16 the House of Representatives and the Committee on  
17 Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Sen-  
18 ate regarding the plans the agency will undertake for the  
19 following:

20 (1) Consistent guidance to applicants on FEMA  
21 disaster funding procedures during the response to  
22 an emergency.

23 (2) Appropriate record maintenance and trans-  
24 fer of documents to new teams during staff transi-  
25 tions.

1           (3) Accurate assistance to applicants and grant-  
 2           ees to ease the administrative burden of obtaining  
 3           and monitoring assistance.

4           (b) MAINTAINING RECORDS.—The report shall also  
 5           include a plan for implementing operating procedures and  
 6           document retention requirements to ensure the mainte-  
 7           nance of appropriate records throughout the lifecycle of  
 8           the disaster.

9           (c) NEW TECHNOLOGIES.—Finally, the report shall  
 10          identify new technologies that further aid the disaster  
 11          workforce in partnering with State, local, and tribal gov-  
 12          ernments and private nonprofits in the wake of a disaster  
 13          or emergency.

14       **SEC. 307. SIMPLIFIED PROCEDURES.**

15          Section 422 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief  
 16          and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5189) is  
 17          amended by striking “\$35,000” and inserting  
 18          “\$1,000,000”.

19       **SEC. 308. MANAGEMENT COSTS.**

20          Section 324 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief  
 21          and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5165b) is  
 22          amended—

23               (1) in subsection (a) by inserting “direct and”  
 24               before “indirect”; and

25               (2) in subsection (b)—

1 (A) by striking “Notwithstanding” and in-  
2 serting the following:

3 “(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding”.

4 (B) by striking “establish” and inserting  
5 the following: “implement the following.”; and

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

7 “(2) SPECIFIC MANAGEMENT COSTS.—The  
8 President shall award the following rates for direct  
9 and indirect management costs to allow grantees  
10 and subgrantees to be reimbursed up to the fol-  
11 lowing percentages of the grant award to cover di-  
12 rect and indirect management costs of administering  
13 the following programs:

14 “(A) HAZARD MITIGATION.—A grantee  
15 under section 404 may be reimbursed not more  
16 than 15 percent of the total amount of the  
17 grant award under such section of which not  
18 more than 10 percent may be used by the  
19 grantee and 5 percent by the subgrantee for  
20 such costs; and

21 “(B) REPAIR, RESTORATION, AND RE-  
22 PLACEMENT OF DAMAGED FACILITIES.—A  
23 grantee under section 406 may be reimbursed  
24 not more than 10 percent of the total amount  
25 of the grant award under such section of which

1 not more than 6 percent may be used by the  
2 grantee and 4 percent by the subgrantee for  
3 such costs.”.

4 **SEC. 309. DEBTS OWED TO THE UNITED STATES RELATED**  
5 **TO DISASTER ASSISTANCE.**

6 (a) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term “covered  
7 assistance” means assistance provided—

8 (1) under section 408 of the Robert T. Stafford  
9 Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42  
10 U.S.C. 5174); and

11 (2) in relation to a major disaster or emergency  
12 declared by the President under section 401 or 501  
13 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emer-  
14 gency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170; 42 U.S.C.  
15 5191) on or after October 30, 2012.

16 (b) WAIVER AUTHORITY.—Notwithstanding section  
17 3716(e) of title 31, United States Code, the Administrator  
18 of the Federal Emergency Management Agency—

19 (1) subject to paragraph (2), may waive a debt  
20 owed to the United States related to covered assist-  
21 ance provided to an individual or household if—

22 (A) the covered assistance was distributed  
23 based on an error by the Federal Emergency  
24 Management Agency;

1 (B) there was no fault on behalf of the  
2 debtor; and

3 (C) the collection of the debt would be  
4 against equity and good conscience; and

5 (2) may not waive a debt under paragraph (1)  
6 if the debt involves fraud, the presentation of a false  
7 claim, or misrepresentation by the debtor or any  
8 party having an interest in the claim.

9 **SEC. 310. STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS FOR DEBTS OWED TO**  
10 **THE UNITED STATES RELATED TO DISASTER**  
11 **ASSISTANCE.**

12 Unless there is evidence of civil or criminal fraud, the  
13 Administrator, on behalf of the President, shall not ini-  
14 tiate new administrative action in any forum to recover—

15 (1) payments made to an individual or house-  
16 hold under section 408 of the Robert T. Stafford  
17 Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42  
18 U.S.C. 5174) more than 3 years after the last date  
19 on which such payments were made; or

20 (2) funds owed by an individual or household  
21 for assistance provided under section 408 of the  
22 Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency  
23 Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5174) more than 3 years  
24 after the last date on which such funds were deter-  
25 mined to be owed.

1                   **TITLE IV—WILDFIRE**  
2                   **PREVENTION AND MITIGATION**

3   **SEC. 401. WILDFIRE MITIGATION ASSISTANCE.**

4           (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 420 of the Robert T.  
5   Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act  
6   (42 U.S.C. 5187) is amended—

7               (1) by redesignating subsection (d) as sub-  
8               section (e); and

9               (2) by inserting after subsection (c) the fol-  
10              lowing:

11           “(d) HAZARD MITIGATION ASSISTANCE.—Whether  
12   or not a major disaster is declared, the President may pro-  
13   vide hazard mitigation assistance in accordance with sec-  
14   tion 404 in any area affected by a fire for which assistance  
15   was provided under this section.”.

16           (b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—The Robert T.  
17   Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act  
18   (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.) is amended—

19               (1) in section 404(a) (42 U.S.C. 5170c(a))—

20                   (A) by inserting before the first period “,  
21                   or any area affected by a fire for which assist-  
22                   ance was provided under section 420”; and

23                   (B) in the third sentence by inserting “or  
24                   event under section 420” after “major disaster”  
25                   each place it appears; and

1           (2) in section 322(e)(1) (42 U.S.C. 5165(e)(1)),  
2       by inserting “or event under section 420” after  
3       “major disaster” each place it appears.

4       (c) **AUTHORITY TO TRANSFER.**—For major disaster  
5 relief funds made available to the Disaster Relief Fund  
6 for the specified purpose of wildfire suppression activities  
7 on Federal lands, the Administrator of the Federal Emer-  
8 gency Management Agency may authorize transfer of  
9 these funds to the Department of Interior and the Depart-  
10 ment of Agriculture.

11 **SEC. 402. ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES.**

12       Section 404 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief  
13 and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170c) is  
14 amended by adding at the end the following:

15       “(f) **USE OF ASSISTANCE.**—Recipients of hazard  
16 mitigation assistance provided under this section and sec-  
17 tion 203 may use the assistance to conduct the following  
18 activities to help reduce the risk of future damage, hard-  
19 ship, loss, or suffering in any area affected by—

20           “(1) a wildfire, including—

21               “(A) reseeding ground cover with quick-  
22 growing or native species;

23               “(B) mulching with straw or chipped wood;

24               “(C) constructing straw, rock, or log dams  
25 in small tributaries to prevent flooding;

1           “(D) placing logs and other erosion bar-  
2           riers to catch sediment on hill slopes;

3           “(E) installing debris traps to modify road  
4           and trail drainage mechanisms;

5           “(F) modifying or removing culverts to  
6           allow drainage to flow freely;

7           “(G) adding drainage dips and con-  
8           structing emergency spillways to keep roads  
9           and bridges from washing out during floods;

10          “(H) planting grass to prevent the spread  
11          of noxious weeds;

12          “(I) installing warning signs;

13          “(J) establishing defensible space meas-  
14          ures; and

15          “(K) reducing hazardous fuels; and

16          “(2) earthquake hazards, including—

17               “(A) improvements to regional seismic net-  
18               works in support of building a capability for  
19               earthquake early warning;

20               “(B) improvements to geodetic networks in  
21               support of building a capability for earthquake  
22               early warning; or

1                   “(C) seismometers, GPS receivers, and as-  
2                   sociated infrastructure in support of building a  
3                   capability for earthquake early warning.”.

○