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Before the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, U.S. House of Representatives
“Innovation in Disaster Prevention: Advancing Technology for Prediction and Response”

September 15, 2026 · As prepared for delivery

Chairman, Ranking Member, and Members of the Committee, thank you. I am Ali Mostafavi, Founder and CEO of Resilitix AI, a Texas startup.

Artificial intelligence offers real opportunities to augment our capabilities for hazard prediction, and for better preparedness and proactive decision-making toward protective action.

Machine learning and computer vision already support hazard prediction and damage assessment. Generative AI and agentic systems now add ways to retrieve information, reason, and coordinate analytical tools.

The area we work on is the gap between a warning and an understanding of what will be impacted. Earlier warnings give communities time to prepare, but understanding who and what is in the path consumes that time. We call this assessment latency: the time between a resilience question and a defensible answer.

I founded Resilitix AI to make integrated disaster assessment accessible to teams with limited analytical capacity. With support from the National Science Foundation’s Small Business Innovation Research, or SBIR, program, we developed EmergenCITY AI, translating fundamental research into operational capability.

Early components of this technology were operationally tested during Hurricanes Beryl, Helene, and Milton.

EmergenCITY AI serves as a first-pass resilience analyst for emergency management and situational awareness, supporting emergency management, healthcare, and infrastructure teams. Its national geospatial foundation connects hazard, population, vulnerability, and infrastructure data, including federal open data.

Users ask questions in plain English. Analytical tools calculate potential exposure and produce numbers, a map, a briefing, and an audit trail in minutes. We call this Glass Box AI: teams can examine the evidence, verify findings, and make every operational decision.

Using EmergenCITY AI before a threat develops, Blue Sky assessments inform plans and exercises. As threats develop, Gray Sky assessments use that same foundation to examine potential impacts. For example, a county can assess potential flood exposure to identify communities needing outreach, facilities needing readiness checks, and where to investigate resource pre-positioning. This helps turn warnings into protective action.

Our ongoing engagements with local, state, and private-sector emergency management have shown significant interest and opportunity for the technology we have developed. Yet adoption barriers are widening the gap between AI advances and everyday practice. Better frontier models do not automatically become disaster capabilities. Three changes would help.

- **First**, create clearer contracting routes from SBIR prototypes to operational customers through public-private partnerships.
- **Second**, coordinate funding and give emergency management agencies flexibility to use grants for pilots, training, and sustained implementation, including in small, rural, and tribal communities.
- **Third**, sustain investment in fundamental research that advances geospatial reasoning, reconciliation of conflicting evidence, and coordination of imagery, measurements, and tools.

American leadership depends on connecting federal open data, frontier disaster AI research and models, and streamlined commercialization pathways for disaster technologies. Disaster technology incubators can connect startups with practitioners, pilots, and early adopters.

In closing, a significant opportunity exists to augment disaster preparedness and emergency management processes with frontier AI, forward-deployed into domain solutions and technologies that strengthen preparedness and situational awareness. Success means earlier protective action: understanding impacts sooner, reaching people who need assistance, and acting before a hazard becomes a disaster for their community. Thank you, and I welcome your questions.