

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1311

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

FEBRUARY 19, 2019

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. UNMET NEED ASSISTANCE.**

4 Title IV of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and
5 Emergency Assistance Act is amended by adding at the
6 end the following:

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

8 “(a) IN GENERAL.—After the declaration of a major
9 disaster, the President may direct the Administrator of

1 the Emergency Management Agency to provide, subject to
2 amounts made available from appropriations, assistance
3 necessary for meeting unmet needs as a result of such dis-
4 aster.

5 “(b) FUNDING.—

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

17 “(2) ESTIMATED AGGREGATE AMOUNT.—Not
18 later than 180 days after each major disaster dec-
19 laration pursuant to this Act, the estimated aggre-
20 gate amount of grants for purposes of paragraph (1)
21 shall be determined by the President and such esti-
22 mated amount need not be reduced, increased, or
23 changed due to variations in estimates.

24 “(3) NO REDUCTION IN AMOUNTS.—The
25 amount set aside pursuant to paragraph (1) shall

1 not reduce the amounts otherwise made available for
2 sections 403, 404, 406, 407, 408, 410, 416, and 428
3 under this Act.

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

8 “(1) Disaster-related home repair and rebuild-
9 ing assistance to families for permanent housing
10 purposes, including in conjunction with eligible ex-
11 penditures under section 408.

12 “(2) Disaster-related unmet needs of families
13 who are unable to obtain adequate assistance from
14 other sources.

15 “(3) Other services that alleviate human suf-
16 fering and promote the well-being of disaster vic-
17 tims.

18 “(4) Economic and business activities (includ-
19 ing food and agriculture) after a disaster to imple-
20 ment post-disaster economic recovery measures, in-
21 cluding planning and technical assistance for long-
22 term economic recovery plans, infrastructure im-
23 provements, business or infrastructure financing,
24 market or industry research, and other activities au-

1 thorized under a comprehensive economic develop-
2 ment strategy.

3 “(d) ACCOUNTING AND FISCAL CONTROLS.—

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

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

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

11 “(C) the process for public notice and com-
12 ment.

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

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

21 **SEC. 2. REPAIR AND REBUILDING.**

22 Section 408(c) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Re-
23 lief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5174) is
24 amended—

1 (1) in paragraph (2)(A)(i) by striking “to a
2 safe and sanitary living or functioning condition”
3 and inserting “to ensure that their home is habitable
4 during longer term recovery. Assistance allowed
5 under this section may be used in coordination with
6 other sources for the repair and rebuilding of an
7 owner-occupied residence.”; and

8 (2) in paragraph (4) by striking “in cases in
9 which” and all that follows through the end of the
10 paragraph and by inserting “if the President con-
11 siders it a cost effective alternative to other housing
12 solutions, including the costs associated with tem-
13 porary housing provided under this section, and
14 long-term rebuilding costs associated with section
15 431”.

16 **SEC. 3. REVIEW BY COMPTROLLER GENERAL.**

17 Not later than 5 years after the date of enactment
18 of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States
19 shall conduct a review on the fiscal controls by States that
20 receive funds under section 431 of the Robert T. Stafford
21 Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act and shall
22 make recommendations to the Committee on Homeland
23 Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate and the

- 1 Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the
- 2 House of Representatives.

