

S 1279

Disaster Area Health and Environmental Monitoring Act of 2003

Congress: 108 (2003–2005, Ended)

Chamber: Senate

Policy Area: Emergency Management

Introduced: Jun 18, 2003

Current Status: Referred to the Subcommittee on Health.

Latest Action: Referred to the Subcommittee on Health. (Dec 4, 2003)

Official Text: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/108th-congress/senate-bill/1279>

Sponsor

Name: Sen. Voinovich, George V. [R-OH]

Party: Republican • **State:** OH • **Chamber:** Senate

Cosponsors (3 total)

Cosponsor	Party / State	Role	Date Joined
Sen. Clinton, Hillary Rodham [D-NY]	D · NY		Jun 18, 2003
Sen. DeWine, Mike [R-OH]	R · OH		Jun 18, 2003
Sen. Schumer, Charles E. [D-NY]	D · NY		Jun 18, 2003

Committee Activity

Committee	Chamber	Activity	Date
Energy and Commerce Committee	House	Referred to	Dec 4, 2003
Environment and Public Works Committee	Senate	Reported By	Nov 3, 2003
Transportation and Infrastructure Committee	House	Referred To	Nov 25, 2003

Subjects & Policy Tags

Policy Area:

Emergency Management

Related Bills

Bill	Relationship	Last Action
108 HR 5329	Related bill	Oct 11, 2004: Sponsor introductory remarks on measure. (CR E1928)

Disaster Area Health and Environmental Monitoring Act of 2003 - (Sec. 2) Amends the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to authorize the President, if one or more chemicals or substances associated with potential acute or chronic human health effects (substances of concern) are being or have been released in a disaster area, to carry out a program for the protection, assessment, monitoring, and study of the health and safety of individuals.

Requires such a program to ensure that: (1) the individuals are adequately informed about and protected against potential health impacts of the substance of concern and potential mental health impacts in a timely manner; (2) they are monitored and studied over time for any such impacts, both short- and long-term; (3) they receive needed health care referrals; and (4) information from any such monitoring and studies is used to prevent or protect against similar health impacts from future disasters.

Allows the program to include such activities as: (1) collecting and analyzing environmental exposure data; (2) developing and disseminating information and educational materials; (3) performing baseline and followup clinical health and mental health examinations and taking biological samples; (4) establishing and maintaining an exposure registry; (5) studying the short- and long-term human health impacts of any exposures through epidemiological and other health studies; and (6) providing assistance to individuals in determining eligibility for health coverage and identifying appropriate health services.

Requires activities under any such program (including baseline health examinations), to the maximum extent practicable, to be commenced in a timely manner that will ensure the highest level of public health protection and effective monitoring.

Makes participation in any registry or study voluntary. Requires the President to take appropriate measures to protect the privacy of any registry or study participant.

Authorizes the President to carry out such a program through a cooperative agreement with a medical institution (including a local health department) or a consortium of medical institutions, especially those located near the disaster area and any other area in which there reside groups of individuals that worked or volunteered in response to the disaster. Requires such an institution to have appropriate experience in the areas of environmental or occupational health, toxicology, and safety.

Requires the President, in establishing and maintaining such a program, to involve interested and affected Federal, State, and local parties, including in advisory or oversight committees or boards.

Requires the President to carry out such a program in accordance with certain regulations promulgated under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 with respect to privacy of individually identifiable health information exchanged in electronic transmissions.

(Sec. 3) Directs the Secretary of Homeland Security, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, and the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to enter jointly into a contract with the National Academy of Sciences to study and report on disaster area health and environmental protection and monitoring, including: (1) establishment of monitoring and response protocols; (2) Federal, State, and local agency responsibilities; and (3) capabilities and capacity within the Federal Government to conduct appropriate environmental monitoring and response in the event of a disaster, including a terrorist attack.

Authorizes appropriations.

(Sec. 4) Amends the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to extend from December 31, 2003, through September 30, 2006, the President's authority to establish a program to provide technical and financial assistance to State and local governments to assist in the implementation of cost-effective predisaster hazard mitigation measures designed to reduce injuries, loss of life, and damage and destruction of property.

Actions Timeline

- **Dec 4, 2003:** Referred to the Subcommittee on Health.
- **Nov 25, 2003:** Message on Senate action sent to the House.
- **Nov 25, 2003:** Received in the House.
- **Nov 25, 2003:** Referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.
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- **Nov 21, 2003:** Measure laid before Senate by unanimous consent. (consideration: S15503-15507; text of measure as reported in Senate: CR S15503-15505)
- **Nov 21, 2003:** The committee substitute as amended agreed to by Unanimous Consent.
- **Nov 21, 2003:** Passed/agreed to in Senate: Passed Senate with an amendment by Unanimous Consent.(text: CR S15503-15507)
- **Nov 21, 2003:** Passed Senate with an amendment by Unanimous Consent. (text: CR S15503-15507)
- **Nov 3, 2003:** Committee on Environment and Public Works. Reported by Senator Inhofe with an amendment in the nature of a substitute. With written report No. 108-183.
- **Nov 3, 2003:** Committee on Environment and Public Works. Reported by Senator Inhofe with an amendment in the nature of a substitute. With written report No. 108-183.
- **Nov 3, 2003:** Placed on Senate Legislative Calendar under General Orders. Calendar No. 360.
- **Jul 30, 2003:** Committee on Environment and Public Works. Ordered to be reported with an amendment in the nature of a substitute favorably.
- **Jun 18, 2003:** Introduced in Senate
- **Jun 18, 2003:** Read twice and referred to the Committee on Environment and Public Works. (text of measure as introduced: CR S8131-8133)