

HR 1471

FEMA Disaster Assistance Reform Act of 2015

Congress: 114 (2015–2017, Ended)

Chamber: House

Policy Area: Emergency Management

Introduced: Mar 19, 2015

Current Status: Received in the Senate and Read twice and referred to the Committee on Homeland Security and Government

Latest Action: Received in the Senate and Read twice and referred to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs. (Mar 1, 2016)

Official Text: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/house-bill/1471>

Sponsor

Name: Rep. Barletta, Lou [R-PA-11]

Party: Republican • **State:** PA • **Chamber:** House

Cosponsors (3 total)

Cosponsor	Party / State	Role	Date Joined
Rep. Carson, Andre [D-IN-7]	D · IN		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. DeFazio, Peter A. [D-OR-4]	D · OR		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Shuster, Bill [R-PA-9]	R · PA		Mar 19, 2015

Committee Activity

Committee	Chamber	Activity	Date
Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee	Senate	Referred To	Mar 1, 2016
Transportation and Infrastructure Committee	House	Discharged from	Apr 15, 2015

Subjects & Policy Tags

Policy Area:

Emergency Management

Related Bills

Bill	Relationship	Last Action
114 S 2971	Related bill	Dec 16, 2016: Became Public Law No: 114-326.
114 S 3411	Related bill	Sep 28, 2016: Read twice and referred to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.
114 S 3172	Related bill	Jul 12, 2016: Read twice and referred to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.
114 S 1090	Related bill	Dec 18, 2015: Became Public Law No: 114-111.
114 HR 1765	Related bill	Apr 15, 2015: Referred to the Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings and Emergency Management.
114 HR 1546	Related bill	Mar 24, 2015: Referred to the Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings and Emergency Management.
114 HR 1009	Related bill	Feb 17, 2015: Referred to the Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings and Emergency Management.

FEMA Disaster Assistance Reform Act of 2015

TITLE I--FEMA REAUTHORIZATION

(Sec. 101) This bill reauthorizes the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) through FY2018.

TITLE II--COMPREHENSIVE STUDY OF DISASTER COSTS AND LOSSES

(Sec. 201) FEMA shall commence, through the National Advisory Council, a comprehensive study related to disaster costs and losses. The Council shall evaluate, and report on, disaster losses and costs and develop recommendations for reducing such losses and costs.

TITLE III--STAFFORD ACT AND OTHER PROGRAMS

(Sec. 301) The bill amends the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (Stafford Act) to: (1) continue the administration of the National Urban Search and Rescue Response System (USAR Response System), and (2) reauthorize the USAR Response System through FY2018.

(Sec. 303) FEMA shall provide a plan for the development of consistent guidance to applicants on FEMA disaster funding, the maintenance of records and transfer of information, relieving administrative burdens, and the implementation of new technology tools during disaster response and recovery operations in the field.

(Sec. 304) The bill amends the Stafford Act to raise the public assistance small projects threshold from \$35,000 to \$1 million.

(Sec. 305) The bill amends the Stafford Act to establish fixed rates to reimburse states and local governments for direct and indirect administrative costs incurred to implement disaster recovery projects.

(Sec. 306) Debts owed to the United States for disaster assistance may be waived if such assistance was distributed based on an error by FEMA, there was no fault on behalf of the debtor, and the collection of the debt would be against equity and good conscience.

(Sec. 307) The statute of limitations for initiating a new administrative action to recover debts owed to the United States for disaster assistance is three years, unless there is evidence of civil or criminal fraud.

(Sec. 308) FEMA shall: (1) provide technical assistance to common interest communities that provide essential services of a governmental nature, and (2) provide recommendations on how common areas of condominiums and housing cooperatives may be eligible for disaster assistance.

(Sec. 309) FEMA shall give greater weight and consideration to severe localized impacts when making major disaster declaration recommendations to the President.

(Sec. 310) A state shall be deemed to have met FEMA's proof of insurance requirements for an individual property owner when title to such property has been encumbered requiring the purchase and maintenance of insurance.

(Sec. 311) FEMA shall not expand its statutory authorities as they related to floodplain management or mapping unless the requirement to do so is explicitly and specifically stated in statute. FEMA's authorities may not be construed to impute

the privately-funded actions of private parties on private land to FEMA for the purpose of extending the requirement.

(Sec. 312) FEMA shall be responsible for efforts to reduce the loss of life and property and to protect the Nation from an earthquake, tsunami, or a combined earthquake and tsunami event.

(Sec. 313) The President shall establish a Federal Interagency Task Force to develop a comprehensive strategy and recommendations on preparation and planning for, mitigating against, responding to, recovering from, and more successfully adapting to an earthquake, tsunami, or a combined earthquake and tsunami event in the Cascadia Subduction Zone.

The Task Force shall enter into an agreement with the National Academies for developing recommendations for a federal research strategy to advance scientific understanding of a Cascadia Subduction Zone earthquake and resulting tsunami preparedness.

FEMA shall report to the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs on the comprehensive strategy and recommendations on administrative actions to further the strategy.

(Sec. 314) The President may provide hazard mitigation assistance in any area affected by a fire for which assistance was provided, whether or not a major disaster is declared.

(Sec. 315) Recipients of hazard mitigation assistance under the Stafford Act may use such assistance to help reduce the risk of future damage, hardship, loss, or suffering in any area affected by a wildfire or earthquake hazards.

Actions Timeline

- **Mar 1, 2016:** Received in the Senate and Read twice and referred to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.
- **Feb 29, 2016:** Reported (Amended) by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. H. Rept. 114-436.
- **Feb 29, 2016:** Placed on the Union Calendar, Calendar No. 333.
- **Feb 29, 2016:** Mr. Barletta moved to suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended.
- **Feb 29, 2016:** Considered under suspension of the rules. (consideration: CR H1015-1023)
- **Feb 29, 2016:** DEBATE - The House proceeded with forty minutes of debate on H.R. 1471.
- **Feb 29, 2016:** Passed/agreed to in House: On motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended Agreed to by voice vote.(text: CR H1016-1020)
- **Feb 29, 2016:** On motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended Agreed to by voice vote. (text: CR H1016-1020)
- **Feb 29, 2016:** Motion to reconsider laid on the table Agreed to without objection.
- **Apr 15, 2015:** Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings and Emergency Management Discharged.
- **Apr 15, 2015:** Committee Consideration and Mark-up Session Held.
- **Apr 15, 2015:** Ordered to be Reported (Amended) by Voice Vote.
- **Mar 20, 2015:** Referred to the Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings and Emergency Management.
- **Mar 19, 2015:** Introduced in House
- **Mar 19, 2015:** Referred to the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.