

117TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 7211

To amend the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, review a final rule of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 24, 2022

Mr. KATKO (for himself, Ms. TITUS, Mr. PAPPAS, Mr. DELGADO, Mr. GIMENEZ, and Mr. GUEST) 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, review a final rule of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and for other purposes.

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.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Small State and Rural
5 Rescue Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. DESIGNATION OF SMALL STATE AND RURAL ADVOCATE.**
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3 Section 326(c) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5165d) is
4 amended—
5

6 (1) by striking “and” at the end of paragraph
7 (2);

8 (2) by redesignating paragraph (3) as paragraph (4); and
9

10 (3) by inserting after paragraph (2) the following:
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12 “(3) assist States in the collection and presentation of material in the disaster or emergency declaration request relevant to demonstrate severe localized impacts within the State for a specific incident, including—
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17 “(A) the per capita personal income by
18 local area, as calculated by the Bureau of Economic Analysis;
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20 “(B) the disaster impacted population profile, as reported by the Bureau of the Census, including—
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22

23 “(i) the percentage of the population
24 for whom poverty status is determined;

25 “(ii) the percentage of the population
26 already receiving Government assistance

1 such as Supplemental Security Income and
2 Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Pro-
3 gram benefits;

4 “(iii) the pre-disaster unemployment
5 rate;

6 “(iv) the percentage of the population
7 that is 65 years old and older;

8 “(v) the percentage of the population
9 18 years old and younger;

10 “(vi) the percentage of the population
11 with a disability;

12 “(vii) the percentage of the population
13 who speak a language other than English
14 and speak English less than ‘very well’;
15 and

16 “(viii) any unique considerations re-
17 garding American Indian and Alaskan Na-
18 tive Tribal populations raised in the
19 State’s request for a major disaster dec-
20 laration that may not be reflected in the
21 data points referenced in this subpara-
22 graph;

23 “(C) the impact to community infrastruc-
24 ture, including—

1 “(i) disruptions to community life-sav-
2 ing and life-sustaining services;

3 “(ii) disruptions or increased demand
4 for essential community services; and

5 “(iii) disruptions to transportation, in-
6 frastructure, and utilities; and

7 “(D) any other information relevant to
8 demonstrate severe local impacts.”.

9 **SEC. 3. GAO REVIEW OF A FINAL RULE.**

10 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Comptroller General shall
11 conduct a review of the Federal Emergency Management
12 Agency’s implementation of its final rule, published on
13 March 21, 2019, amending section 206.48(b) of title 44,
14 Code of Federal Regulations (regarding factors considered
15 when evaluating a Governor’s request for a major disaster
16 declaration), which revised the factors that the Agency
17 considers when evaluating a Governor’s request for a
18 major disaster declaration authorizing individual assist-
19 ance under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and
20 Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq).

21 (b) SCOPE.—The review required under subsection
22 (a) shall include the following:

23 (1) An assessment of the criteria used by the
24 Agency to assess individual assistance requests fol-

1 lowing a major disaster declaration authorizing indi-
2 vidual assistance.

3 (2) An assessment of the consistency with
4 which the Agency uses the updated Individual As-
5 sistance Declaration Factors when assessing the im-
6 pact of individual communities after a major dis-
7 aster declaration.

8 (3) An assessment of the impact, if any, of
9 using the updated Individual Assistance Declaration
10 Factors has had on equity in disaster recovery out-
11 comes.

12 (4) Recommendations to improve the use of the
13 Individual Assistance Declaration Factors to in-
14 crease equity in disaster recovery outcomes.

15 (c) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date
16 of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall
17 submit to the Committee on Transportation and Infra-
18 structure of the House of Representatives and the Com-
19 mittee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
20 of the Senate a report on the review required under this
21 section.

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