

118TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 1796

To improve individual assistance provided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 24, 2023

Ms. TITUS (for herself, Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana, and Mr. CARTER of Louisiana) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and in addition to the Committees on Financial Services, and Small Business, 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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## A BILL

To improve individual assistance provided by 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; TABLE OF CONTENTS.**

4 (a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the  
5 “Disaster Survivors Fairness Act of 2023”.

6 (b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for  
7 this Act is as follows:

- Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.
- Sec. 2. Information sharing for federal agencies.
- Sec. 3. Universal application for individual assistance.

- Sec. 4. Repair and rebuilding.
- Sec. 5. Direct assistance.
- Sec. 6. State-managed housing pilot authority.
- Sec. 7. Management costs.
- Sec. 8. Funding for online guides for post-disaster assistance.
- Sec. 9. Individual assistance dashboard.
- Sec. 10. FEMA reports.
- Sec. 11. Sheltering of emergency response personnel.
- Sec. 12. Improved rental assistance.
- Sec. 13. GAO report on preliminary damage assessments.
- Sec. 14. Applicability.

1           (c) DEFINITIONS.—Except as otherwise provided, the  
 2 terms used in this Act have the meanings given such terms  
 3 in section 102 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief  
 4 and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5122).

5 **SEC. 2. INFORMATION SHARING FOR FEDERAL AGENCIES.**

6           (a) ESTABLISHMENT OF UNIFIED DISASTER APPLI-  
 7 CATION SYSTEM.—

8           (1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the  
 9 Federal Emergency Management Agency shall estab-  
 10 lish and maintain a web-based interagency electronic  
 11 information sharing system, to be known as the  
 12 “unified disaster application system”, to—

13                   (A) facilitate the administration of the uni-  
 14 versal application for direct Federal disaster as-  
 15 sistance established under section 3;

16                   (B) carry out the purposes of disaster as-  
 17 sistance programs swiftly, efficiently, equitably,  
 18 and in accordance with applicable laws, regula-  
 19 tions, and the privacy and data protections pro-  
 20 vided under this section; and

1 (C) support the detection, prevention, and  
2 investigation of waste, fraud, abuse, inequitable  
3 allocation of resources, or discrimination in the  
4 administration of disaster assistance programs.

5 (2) AUTHORITIES OF ADMINISTRATOR.—In es-  
6 tablishing and maintaining the unified disaster ap-  
7 plication system under this subsection, the Adminis-  
8 trator may collect and maintain disaster assistance  
9 information received from a disaster assistance  
10 agency, a block grant recipient, or an applicant for  
11 a disaster assistance program and share such infor-  
12 mation with any other disaster assistance agency or  
13 block grant recipient using such system.

14 (3) REQUIREMENTS.—The Administrator shall  
15 ensure that the unified disaster application system  
16 established and maintained under this subsection—

17 (A) allows an applicant to receive status  
18 updates on an application for disaster assist-  
19 ance programs submitted through such system;

20 (B) allows for applicants to update disaster  
21 assistance information throughout the recovery  
22 journeys of such applicants in accordance with  
23 established application timeframes;

24 (C) allows for the distribution to applicants  
25 of information about additional recovery re-

1 sources that may be available in a disaster  
2 stricken area;

3 (D) provides an applicant with information  
4 and documentation relating to an application  
5 for a disaster assistance program submitted by  
6 such applicant; and

7 (E) contains any other capabilities deter-  
8 mined necessary by the head of a disaster as-  
9 sistance agency.

10 (b) DATA SECURITY.—The Administrator may facili-  
11 tate the collection of disaster assistance information into  
12 the unified disaster application system established under  
13 subsection (a) only after the following requirements have  
14 been met:

15 (1) The Administrator certifies that the unified  
16 disaster application system substantially complies  
17 with the data security standards and best practices  
18 established pursuant to subchapter II of chapter 35  
19 of title 44, United States Code, and any other appli-  
20 cable Federal information security policy.

21 (2) The Secretary of Homeland Security pub-  
22 lishes a privacy impact assessment for the unified  
23 disaster application system, in accordance with sec-  
24 tion 208(b)(1)(B) of the E-Government Act of 2002  
25 (44 U.S.C. 3501 note).

1           (3) The Administrator, after consulting with  
2 disaster assistance agencies, publishes standard  
3 rules of behavior for disaster assistance agencies,  
4 block grant recipients, and personnel granted access  
5 to disaster assistance information to protect such in-  
6 formation from improper disclosure.

7           (c) COLLECTION AND SHARING OF ADDITIONAL  
8 RECORDS AND INFORMATION.—

9           (1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator may au-  
10 thorize the additional collection, maintenance, shar-  
11 ing, and use of disaster assistance information by  
12 publishing a notice on the unified disaster applica-  
13 tion system established under subsection (a) that in-  
14 cludes a detailed description of—

15                   (A) the specific amendments to the collec-  
16 tion, maintenance, and sharing of disaster as-  
17 sistance information authorized;

18                   (B) why each such amendment to how dis-  
19 aster assistance information is collected, main-  
20 tained, or shared is necessary to carry out the  
21 purposes of a disaster assistance program and  
22 consistent with the fair information practice  
23 principles; and

24                   (C) the disaster assistance agencies and  
25 block grant recipients that will be granted ac-

1           cess to the additional information to carry out  
2           the purposes of any disaster assistance pro-  
3           gram.

4           (2) NOTICE AND PUBLICATION REQUIRE-  
5           MENTS.—The publication of a notice under para-  
6           graph (1) of a revision to the unified disaster appli-  
7           cation system of records prior to any new collection,  
8           or uses, of Privacy Act categories of records, to  
9           carry out the purposes of a disaster assistance pro-  
10          gram with regard to a disaster declared by the  
11          President under section 401 or 501 of the Robert T.  
12          Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance  
13          Act (42 U.S.C. 5170; 5191), shall be deemed to sat-  
14          isfy the notice and publication requirements of sec-  
15          tion 552a(e)(4) of title 5, United States Code, for  
16          the entire period of performance for any assistance  
17          provided under a disaster assistance program.

18          (3) WAIVER OF INFORMATION COLLECTION RE-  
19          QUIREMENTS.—

20                 (A) IN GENERAL.—Upon the declaration of  
21                 a major disaster or emergency pursuant to sec-  
22                 tions 401 or 501 of the Robert T. Stafford Dis-  
23                 aster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42  
24                 U.S.C. 5170; 5191) by the President, the Ad-  
25                 ministrator may waive the requirements of sub-

1 chapter I of chapter 35 of title 44, United  
2 States Code, with respect to voluntary collection  
3 of information for the entire period of perform-  
4 ance for any assistance provided under a dis-  
5 aster assistance program.

6 (B) TRANSPARENCY.—Upon exercising the  
7 waiver authority under subparagraph (A), the  
8 Administrator shall—

9 (i) promptly post on a website of the  
10 Federal Emergency Management Agency a  
11 brief justification for such waiver, the an-  
12 ticipated period of time such waiver will be  
13 in effect, and the disaster assistance offices  
14 within the Federal Emergency Manage-  
15 ment Agency to which such waiver shall  
16 apply; and

17 (ii) update the information relating to  
18 such waiver, as applicable.

19 (4) GAO REVIEW OF WAIVER OF INFORMATION  
20 COLLECTION REQUIREMENTS.—

21 (A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year  
22 after the date of enactment of this Act, the  
23 Comptroller General of the United States shall  
24 issue a report describing the benefits and poten-  
25 tial risks associated with authorizing the waiver

1 of the information collection requirements de-  
2 scribed in paragraph (3).

3 (B) CONTENTS.—The report required  
4 under subparagraph (A) shall include an assess-  
5 ment of the extent to which a waiver described  
6 in paragraph (3) would—

7 (i) affect the paperwork burden for in-  
8 dividuals, small businesses, State, local and  
9 tribal governments, and other persons;

10 (ii) affect the consistent application of  
11 Federal laws relating to—

12 (I) privacy and confidentiality;

13 (II) security of information; and

14 (III) access to information; and

15 (iii) encourage or deter a State or  
16 other entity from participating in the vol-  
17 untary collection of information for the du-  
18 ration of a major disaster or emergency.

19 (d) USE BY OTHER FEDERAL AGENCIES.—

20 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator may per-  
21 mit a Federal agency other than a disaster assist-  
22 ance agency listed in subparagraphs (A) through  
23 (D) of subsection (f)(3) to use the unified disaster  
24 application system established under subsection (a)  
25 for the purpose of facilitating disaster-related assist-



1       ance if such agency enters into an agreement con-  
2       taining the terms described in paragraph (2).

3               (2) AGENCY AGREEMENT.—An agreement en-  
4       tered into under paragraph (1) shall contain the fol-  
5       lowing terms:

6               (A) The Federal agency shall—

7                       (i) collect, share, maintain, and use  
8                       disaster assistance information in compli-  
9                       ance with this section and any policies of  
10                      the Federal Emergency Management  
11                      Agency and any information protection and  
12                      use policies of such Federal agency; and

13                     (ii) train any personnel granted access  
14                     to disaster assistance information on the  
15                     rules of behavior established by the Admin-  
16                     istrator under subsection (b)(3).

17               (B) In the event of any unauthorized dis-  
18       closure of disaster assistance information, the  
19       Federal agency shall—

20                     (i) notify the Administrator within 24  
21                     hours of discovering any such unauthorized  
22                     disclosure;

23                     (ii) cooperate fully with the Adminis-  
24                     trator in the investigation and remediation  
25                     of any such disclosure;

1 (iii) cooperate fully in the prosecution  
2 of a person responsible for such disclosure;  
3 and

4 (iv) assume the responsibility for any  
5 compensation, civil liability, or other reme-  
6 diation measures, whether awarded by a  
7 judgment of a court or agreed as a com-  
8 promise of any potential claims by or on  
9 behalf of an applicant, including by obtain-  
10 ing credit monitoring and remediation  
11 services, for an improper disclosure that  
12 is—

13 (I) caused, directly or indirectly,  
14 by the acts or omissions of officers,  
15 employees, and contractors of the  
16 agency; or

17 (II) from any electronic system  
18 of records that is created or main-  
19 tained by the agency pursuant to sec-  
20 tion 552a(e) of title 5, United States  
21 Code.

22 (3) PUBLICATION OF AGENCY AGREEMENT.—  
23 The Administrator shall publish an agency agree-  
24 ment entered into under this subsection on the same

1 website as the unified disaster application system es-  
2 tablished under subsection (a).

3 (e) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—The sharing and use  
4 of disaster assistance information that is subject to the  
5 requirements of section 552a of title 5, United States  
6 Code, by disaster assistance agencies and block grant re-  
7 cipients—

8 (1) shall not be—

9 (A) construed as a matching program for  
10 purposes of section 552a(a)(8) of such title; or

11 (B) subject to the remaining computer  
12 matching provisions of section 552a of such  
13 title; and

14 (2) shall be in addition to any other law pro-  
15 viding for the sharing or use of such information.

16 (f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

17 (1) APPLICANT.—The term “applicant”  
18 means—

19 (A) a person who applies for disaster as-  
20 sistance from a disaster assistance program;  
21 and

22 (B) a person on whose behalf a person de-  
23 scribed in subparagraph (A) has applied for dis-  
24 aster assistance.

1           (2) BLOCK GRANT RECIPIENT.—The term  
2 “block grant recipient” means a State, local govern-  
3 ment, or Indian Tribe that receives assistance  
4 through the disaster assistance program described in  
5 paragraph (5)(B)(i).

6           (3) DISASTER ASSISTANCE AGENCY.—The term  
7 “disaster assistance agency” means—

8           (A) the Federal Emergency Management  
9 Agency;

10           (B) the Department of Housing and  
11 Urban Development;

12           (C) the Small Business Administration;

13           (D) the Department of Agriculture; and

14           (E) any other Federal agency that the Ad-  
15 ministrator permits to use the unified disaster  
16 application system under subsection (d).

17           (4) DISASTER ASSISTANCE INFORMATION.—The  
18 term “disaster assistance information” includes any  
19 personal, demographic, biographical, geographical,  
20 financial information, or other information that a  
21 disaster assistance agency or block grant recipient is  
22 authorized to collect, maintain, share, or use to proc-  
23 ess an application for disaster assistance or other-  
24 wise carry out a disaster assistance program.

1           (5) DISASTER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.—The  
2 term “disaster assistance program” means—

3           (A) any program that provides assistance  
4 to individuals and households under title IV or  
5 title V of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief  
6 and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170  
7 et seq.); or

8           (B) any other assistance program carried  
9 out by a disaster assistance agency that pro-  
10 vides assistance to an individual, household, or  
11 organization related to a major disaster or  
12 emergency declared under sections 401 or 501  
13 of such Act, including—

14           (i) assistance for activities related to  
15 disaster relief, long-term recovery, restora-  
16 tion of infrastructure and housing, eco-  
17 nomic revitalization, and mitigation that  
18 are authorized under title I of the Housing  
19 and Community Development Act of 1974  
20 (42 U.S.C. 5301 et seq.);

21           (ii) any loan that is authorized under  
22 section 7(b) of the Small Business Act (15  
23 U.S.C. 636(b)); and

24           (iii) the distribution of food benefit al-  
25 lotments as authorized under section 412

1 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief  
2 and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C.  
3 5179) and section 5(h) of the Food Stamp  
4 Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 2014(h)).

5 **SEC. 3. UNIVERSAL APPLICATION FOR INDIVIDUAL ASSIST-**  
6 **ANCE.**

7 (a) UNIVERSAL APPLICATION.—The Administrator  
8 of the Federal Emergency Management Agency shall de-  
9 velop and establish a universal application for direct Fed-  
10 eral disaster assistance for individuals in areas impacted  
11 by emergencies or disasters.

12 (b) CONSULTATION AND SUPPORT.—

13 (1) CONSULTATION.—In carrying out this sec-  
14 tion, the Administrator shall consult with the fol-  
15 lowing:

16 (A) The Director of the Office of Manage-  
17 ment and Budget.

18 (B) The Administrator of the Small Busi-  
19 ness Administration.

20 (C) The Secretary of Housing and Urban  
21 Development.

22 (D) The Secretary of Agriculture.

23 (2) SUPPORT.—The entities described in para-  
24 graph (1) shall provide prompt support to the Ad-  
25 ministrator.

1 (c) SURVEY.—The application established under sub-  
2 section (a) shall include a voluntary survey to collect the  
3 demographic data of an applicant.

4 (d) GAO ASSESSMENT ON IDENTITY THEFT AND  
5 DISASTER FRAUD IN DISASTER ASSISTANCE PRO-  
6 GRAMS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enact-  
7 ment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United  
8 States shall—

9 (1) conduct an assessment of improper and po-  
10 tentially fraudulent Federal disaster assistance for  
11 individuals made to survivors of major disasters de-  
12 clared in 2020 and 2021, including through identity  
13 theft; and

14 (2) submit to the Committee on Transportation  
15 and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives  
16 and the Committee on Homeland Security and Gov-  
17 ernmental Affairs of the Senate a report that de-  
18 scribes—

19 (A) the prevalence of improper and poten-  
20 tially fraudulent Federal disaster assistance for  
21 individuals made to registrants who used invalid  
22 information to apply for disaster assistance, in-  
23 cluding through identity theft;

24 (B) the number of disaster survivors whose  
25 claims for Federal disaster assistance for indi-

1           viduals were denied due to another individual  
2           filing a fraudulent application using their per-  
3           sonal identifying information;

4           (C) the adequacy of existing fraud preven-  
5           tion protocols in place on the Federal Emer-  
6           gency Management Agency’s online application  
7           for Federal disaster assistance for individuals;  
8           and

9           (D) recommendations for improving the  
10          identity verification protocols in place for Fed-  
11          eral disaster assistance for individuals.

12 **SEC. 4. REPAIR AND REBUILDING.**

13          (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 408(b)(1) of the Robert  
14 T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act  
15 (42 U.S.C. 5174(b)(1)) is amended—

16           (1) by striking “rendered uninhabitable” and  
17           inserting “damaged by a major disaster”; and

18           (2) by striking “uninhabitable, as a result of  
19           damage caused by a major disaster” and inserting  
20           “damaged by a major disaster”.

21          (b) HAZARD MITIGATION.—Section 408 of the Rob-  
22 ert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance  
23 Act (42 U.S.C. 5174) is amended—

24           (1) in subsection (c) by adding at the end the  
25           following:



1 “(5) HAZARD MITIGATION.—

2 “(A) IN GENERAL.—The President may  
3 provide financial assistance to individuals and  
4 households whose primary residence, utilities, or  
5 residential infrastructure are damaged by a  
6 major disaster, for cost-effective hazard mitiga-  
7 tion measures that reduce threats to life and  
8 property, or future damage to such residence,  
9 utilities, or infrastructure in future disasters.

10 “(B) RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER ASSIST-  
11 ANCE.—A recipient of assistance provided  
12 under this paragraph shall not be required to  
13 show that the assistance can be met through  
14 other means, except insurance proceeds.”; and  
15 (2) in subsection (h)—

16 (A) in paragraph (1) by inserting “, finan-  
17 cial assistance for hazard mitigation under sub-  
18 section (c)(5)(A),” after “subsection  
19 (c)(1)(A)(i)”;

20 (B) in paragraph (3) by striking “para-  
21 graphs (1) and (2)” and inserting “paragraphs  
22 (1), (2), and (3)”;

23 (C) by adding at the end the following:

24 “(5) HAZARD MITIGATION.—The maximum fi-  
25 nancial assistance any individual or household may

1 receive under subsection (c)(5) shall be equivalent to  
2 the amount set forth in paragraph (1) with respect  
3 to a single major disaster.”.

4 **SEC. 5. DIRECT ASSISTANCE.**

5 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 408(c) of the Robert T.  
6 Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act  
7 (42 U.S.C. 5174(c)) is further amended by striking para-  
8 graph (2) and inserting the following:

9 “(2) REPAIRS.—

10 “(A) FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR RE-  
11 PAIRS.—The President may provide financial  
12 assistance for the repair of owner-occupied pri-  
13 vate residences, utilities, and residential infra-  
14 structure (such as a private access route) dam-  
15 aged by a major disaster, or with respect to in-  
16 dividuals with disabilities, rendered inaccessible  
17 by a major disaster.

18 “(B) DIRECT ASSISTANCE FOR REPAIRS.—

19 “(i) IN GENERAL.—The President  
20 may provide direct assistance to individuals  
21 and households who are unable to make  
22 use of financial assistance under subpara-  
23 graph (A) and when there is a lack of  
24 available resources, for—

1                   “(I) the repair of owner-occupied  
2                   private residences, utilities, and resi-  
3                   dential infrastructure (such as a pri-  
4                   vate access route) damaged by a  
5                   major disaster, or with respect to indi-  
6                   viduals with disabilities, rendered in-  
7                   accessible by a disaster; and

8                   “(II) eligible hazard mitigation  
9                   measures that reduce the likelihood  
10                  and future damage to such residences,  
11                  utilities, and infrastructure.

12                  “(ii) ELIGIBILITY.—A recipient of as-  
13                  sistance under this subparagraph shall not  
14                  be eligible for assistance under paragraph  
15                  (1), unless otherwise determined by the  
16                  Administrator.

17                  “(C) RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER ASSIST-  
18                  ANCE.—A recipient of assistance provided  
19                  under this paragraph shall not be required to  
20                  show that the assistance can be met through  
21                  other means, except insurance proceeds.”.

22                  (b) STATE- OR INDIAN TRIBAL GOVERNMENT-AD-  
23                  MINISTERED ASSISTANCE AND OTHER NEEDS ASSIST-  
24                  ANCE.—Section 408(f) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster

1 Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5174(f))  
2 is amended—

3 (1) by striking “subsections (c)(1)(B), (c)(4),  
4 and (e)” each place it appears and inserting “para-  
5 graphs (1)(B), (2)(B), and (4) of subsection (c) and  
6 subsection (e)”;

7 (2) in paragraph (3)(A) by striking “subsection  
8 (c)(1)(B), (c)(4), or (e)” and inserting “paragraph  
9 (1)(B), (2)(B), or (4) of subsection (c) or subsection  
10 (e)”.

11 **SEC. 6. STATE-MANAGED HOUSING PILOT AUTHORITY.**

12 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 408 of the Robert T.  
13 Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act  
14 (42 U.S.C. 5174) is amended—

15 (1) in subsection (f)(3)—

16 (A) in subparagraph (A)—

17 (i) by striking “A State” and insert-  
18 ing the following:

19 “(i) IN GENERAL.—A State”; and

20 (ii) by adding at the end the fol-  
21 lowing:

22 “(ii) TRANSPARENCY.—The President  
23 shall make public the criteria used to  
24 evaluate applications under clause (i) and  
25 determine if a State or Indian tribal gov-

1           ernment meets the criteria described in  
2           subparagraph (B) to administer grants de-  
3           scribed in paragraph (1)(A).”;  
4           (B) in subparagraph (C)(ii)—  
5                 (i) in subclause (I) by striking “;  
6                 and” and inserting a semicolon;  
7                 (ii) in subclause (II) by striking the  
8                 period at the end and inserting a semi-  
9                 colon; and  
10                (iii) by adding at the end the fol-  
11                lowing:  
12                         “(III) outline the approach of the  
13                         State to help disaster survivors create  
14                         a permanent housing plan; and  
15                         “(IV) outline the approach of the  
16                         State to provide individual disaster  
17                         survivors some choice of communities  
18                         and properties, as practicable.”;  
19                (C) by striking subparagraph (F);  
20                (D) by redesignating subparagraphs (G),  
21                (H), (I), and (J) as subparagraphs (F), (G),  
22                (H), and (I), respectively; and  
23                (E) in subparagraph (I), as so redesign-  
24                nated—

1 (i) in clause (ii) by striking “Not later  
2 than 2 years after the date of enactment  
3 of this paragraph, the” and inserting  
4 “The”; and

5 (ii) in clause (iii) by striking “2  
6 years” and inserting “10 years”; and

7 (2) in subsection (g)—

8 (A) in paragraph (1) by striking “para-  
9 graph (2)” and inserting “paragraphs (2) and  
10 (3)”; and

11 (B) by adding at the end the following:

12 “(3) DISASTER ASSISTANCE.—In the case of as-  
13 sistance provided under subsections (c)(1)(B),  
14 (c)(2)(B), and (c)(4), the Federal share shall be not  
15 less than 75 percent.”.

16 (b) GAO ASSESSMENT.—Upon the expiration of the  
17 authority to carry out section 408(f) of the Robert T.  
18 Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act  
19 (42 U.S.C. 5174(f)) as a pilot program, the Comptroller  
20 General of the United States shall issue a report on the  
21 effectiveness, successes, and challenges of any pilot pro-  
22 gram carried out pursuant to such section and make rec-  
23 ommendations on how to improve the provision of assist-  
24 ance under such section.

1 **SEC. 7. MANAGEMENT COSTS.**

2 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 324(b)(2) of the Robert  
3 T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act  
4 (42 U.S.C. 5165b(b)(2)(C)) is amended by adding at the  
5 end the following:

6 “(C) INDIVIDUAL ASSISTANCE.—A grantee  
7 under section 408(f) may be reimbursed not  
8 more than 12 percent of the total award  
9 amount under each such section.

10 “(D) CRISIS COUNSELING ASSISTANCE,  
11 TRAINING, AND CASE MANAGEMENT SERV-  
12 ICES.—A grantee and subgrantee, cumulatively,  
13 may be reimbursed not more than 15 percent of  
14 the total amount of the grant award under ei-  
15 ther section 416 or 426.”.

16 (b) ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS.—Section 408(f)(1) of  
17 the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency As-  
18 sistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5174) is amended—

19 (1) by striking “(A) GRANT TO STATE.—” and  
20 all that follows through “subsection (g),” and insert-  
21 ing “Subject to subsection (g),”; and

22 (2) by striking subparagraph (B).

23 **SEC. 8. FUNDING FOR ONLINE GUIDES FOR POST-DISASTER**  
24 **ASSISTANCE.**

25 (a) USE OF SERVICES OF OTHER AGENCIES.—Sec-  
26 tion 201(a) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and

1 Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5131(a)) is amend-  
2 ed—

3 (1) in paragraph (7), by striking the period at  
4 the end and inserting “; and”; and

5 (2) by adding at the end the following:

6 “(8) post-disaster assistance.”.

7 (b) GRANTS FOR ONLINE GUIDES FOR ASSIST-  
8 ANCE.—Section 201 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster  
9 Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5131)  
10 is amended by adding at the end the following:

11 “(e) FUNDING FOR ONLINE GUIDES FOR ASSIST-  
12 ANCE.—

13 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the  
14 Federal Emergency Management Agency may pro-  
15 vide funding to a State agency established under  
16 subsection (c) to establish, update, or operate a  
17 website to provide information relating to post-dis-  
18 aster recovery funding and resources to a community  
19 or an individual impacted by a major disaster or  
20 emergency.

21 “(2) MANAGEMENT.—A website created under  
22 this subsection shall be—

23 “(A) managed by the State agency; and

24 “(B) suitable for the residents of the State  
25 of the State agency.



1           “(3) CONTENT.—The Administrator may pro-  
2           vide funding to a State agency under this subsection  
3           to establish a website that contains only 1 or more  
4           of the following:

5                   “(A) A list of Federal, State, and local  
6                   sources of post-disaster recovery funding or as-  
7                   sistance that may be available to a community  
8                   after a major disaster or emergency.

9                   “(B) A list of Federal, State, and local  
10                   sources of post-disaster recovery funding or as-  
11                   sistance that may be available to an individual  
12                   impacted by a major disaster or emergency.

13                   “(C) A technical guide that lists and ex-  
14                   plains the costs and benefits of alternatives  
15                   available to a community to mitigate the im-  
16                   pacts of a major disaster or emergency and pre-  
17                   pare for sequential hazards such as flooding  
18                   after a wildfire.

19           “(4) COOPERATION.—A State agency that re-  
20           ceives funding under this subsection shall cooperate  
21           with the Secretary of the Interior, the Secretary of  
22           Agriculture, the Secretary of Housing and Urban  
23           Development, the Administrator of the Small Busi-  
24           ness Administration, and the Administrator of the

1 Federal Emergency Management Agency in devel-  
2 oping a website under this subsection.

3 “(5) UPDATES.—A State agency that receives  
4 funding to establish a website under this subsection  
5 shall update the website not less than once every 6  
6 months.”.

7 **SEC. 9. INDIVIDUAL ASSISTANCE DASHBOARD.**

8 Title IV of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and  
9 Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170 et seq.) is  
10 amended by adding at the end the following:

11 **“SEC. 431. INDIVIDUAL ASSISTANCE DASHBOARD.**

12 “(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after a  
13 declaration by the President that a major disaster exists  
14 under section 401, the Administrator of the Federal  
15 Emergency Management Agency shall publish on a  
16 website of the Agency an interactive web tool displaying  
17 the following information with respect to such disaster:

18 “(1) The number of applications for assistance  
19 under section 408, including a description of the  
20 number of applications for assistance related to  
21 housing under such section and the number of appli-  
22 cations for assistance to address other needs under  
23 section 408(e).

24 “(2) The number of applications for such as-  
25 sistance that are approved.

1           “(3) The number of applications for such as-  
2           sistance that are denied.

3           “(4) A ranked list of the reasons for the denial  
4           of such applications, including the number of appli-  
5           cations for each reason for denial.

6           “(5) If available, the dollar amount of assist-  
7           ance provided pursuant to section 408 to applicants  
8           who are—

9                   “(A) property owners with a household an-  
10                  nual income—

11                           “(i) above the national median house-  
12                           hold income; and

13                           “(ii) below the national median house-  
14                           hold income; and

15                   “(B) renters with a household annual in-  
16                  come—

17                           “(i) above the national median house-  
18                           hold income; and

19                           “(ii) below the national median house-  
20                           hold income.

21           “(6) The estimated percentage of residential  
22           property that was destroyed as a result of the major  
23           disaster, if available.

24           “(7) Any other information that the Adminis-  
25           trator determines to be relevant.

1       “(b) PERSONALLY IDENTIFIABLE INFORMATION.—  
2 The Administrator shall ensure that none of the informa-  
3 tion published under subsection (a) contains the personally  
4 identifiable information of an applicant.”.

5 **SEC. 10. FEMA REPORTS.**

6       (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the  
7 date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the  
8 Federal Emergency Management Agency shall submit to  
9 the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of  
10 the House of Representatives and the Committee on  
11 Homeland Security and Government Affairs of the Senate  
12 a report with respect to fiscal year 2016 through the most  
13 recent fiscal year ending before the date of enactment of  
14 this Act, and an annual report for any fiscal year begin-  
15 ning on or after the date of enactment of this Act, describ-  
16 ing—

17           (1) the average amount of individual assistance  
18           and individual and household assistance provided  
19           under section 408 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster  
20           Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C.  
21           5121 et seq.) to, and the rate of denial of individual  
22           assistance and individual and household assistance  
23           provided under such section for—

24                   (A) all individuals;

25                   (B) households;

1 (C) individuals and households with a re-  
2 ported annual income under 75 percent of the  
3 national median household income;

4 (D) individuals with a reported annual in-  
5 come over 125 percent of the national median  
6 household income; and

7 (E) individuals with a reported annual in-  
8 come between 75 percent and 125 percent of  
9 the national median household income; and

10 (2) an explanation for any factors causing an  
11 increase in the rate of denial of the assistance de-  
12 scribed in paragraph (1), if applicable.

13 (b) INFORMATION REQUIRED.—In the report sub-  
14 mitted under subsection (a), the Administrator shall de-  
15 scribe the number of homeowners and the number of rent-  
16 ers for each category of individuals and households de-  
17 scribed in subparagraphs (C) through (E) of subsection  
18 (a)(1).

19 **SEC. 11. SHELTERING OF EMERGENCY RESPONSE PER-**  
20 **SONNEL.**

21 Section 403 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief  
22 and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170b) is  
23 amended by adding at the end the following:

24 “(e) SHELTERING OF EMERGENCY RESPONSE PER-  
25 SONNEL.—

1           “(1) IN GENERAL.—For any major disaster for  
2           which the President has authorized emergency pro-  
3           tective measures for an area within the jurisdiction  
4           of a State, tribal, or local government, the Adminis-  
5           trator may reimburse the State, tribal, or local gov-  
6           ernment for costs relating to sheltering emergency  
7           response personnel, including individuals that are a  
8           part of the same predisaster household as such per-  
9           sonnel, in exclusive-use congregate or non-con-  
10          gregate settings if the Governor of the State or chief  
11          executive of the tribal or local government deter-  
12          mines that the damage or disruption to such area is  
13          of such a magnitude as to disrupt the provision of  
14          emergency protective measures within such area.

15           “(2) LIMITATION OF ASSISTANCE.—

16           “(A) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator  
17           may only reimburse a State, tribal, or local gov-  
18           ernment for the costs of sheltering emergency  
19           response personnel under paragraph (1) for  
20           such a period of time as the Administrator de-  
21           termines reasonable based in the individual  
22           characteristics of and impacts to the affected  
23           area, including the extent of damage, the avail-  
24           ability of alternative housing options, the avail-

1 ability of utilities, and disruptions to transpor-  
2 tation infrastructure.

3 “(B) MAXIMUM DURATION OF REIMBURSE-  
4 MENT.—The period of reimbursement under  
5 subparagraph (A) may not exceed the 6-month  
6 period beginning on the date on which the inci-  
7 dent period ends.

8 “(3) DEFINITION.—In this subsection, the term  
9 ‘emergency response personnel’ means—

10 “(A) employees or contracted employees  
11 providing law enforcement, fire suppression,  
12 rescue, emergency medical, emergency manage-  
13 ment, or emergency communications services;  
14 and

15 “(B) elected officials, except members of  
16 Congress, responsible for the overseeing or di-  
17 recting emergency response operations or recov-  
18 ery activities.”.

19 **SEC. 12. IMPROVED RENTAL ASSISTANCE.**

20 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 408(c)(1)(A)(ii) of the  
21 Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assist-  
22 ance Act (42 U.S.C. 5174(c)(1)(A)(ii)) is amended by in-  
23 serting “, including local post-disaster rent increases,”  
24 after “accommodation provided”.

1           (b) STUDY.—Not later than 1 year after the date of  
2 enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal  
3 Emergency Management Agency shall conduct a study to  
4 examine the unique challenges of renters when seeking  
5 Federal disaster assistance and any disparities of assist-  
6 ance provided to homeowners and renters pursuant to sec-  
7 tion 408 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and  
8 Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5174) and develop  
9 a plan that addresses any identified challenges and dis-  
10 parities, including any recommendations for legislative ac-  
11 tion.

12           (c) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Upon completion of the  
13 activities carried out under subsection (b), the Adminis-  
14 trator shall submit to the Committee on Transportation  
15 and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and  
16 the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental  
17 Affairs of the Senate a report containing the study and  
18 recommendations required under subsection (b).

19           (d) CONSULTATION.—In completing the study and  
20 report required under subsections (b) and (c), the Admin-  
21 istrator shall consult with appropriate Federal entities and  
22 stakeholders involved in disaster housing.



1 **SEC. 13. GAO REPORT ON PRELIMINARY DAMAGE ASSESS-**  
2 **MENTS.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Comptroller General of the  
4 United States shall conduct a study on the practices, in-  
5 cluding the accuracy of such practices, that the Federal  
6 Emergency Management Agency uses when conducting  
7 preliminary damage assessments for the purposes of pro-  
8 viding assistance under section 408 of the Robert T. Staf-  
9 ford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42.  
10 U.S.C. 5174).

11 (b) CONTENTS.—The Comptroller General shall in-  
12 clude in the study conducted under subsection (a) the fol-  
13 lowing:

14 (1) A comparison of the process and procedures  
15 used by the Federal Emergency Management Agen-  
16 cy to complete preliminary damage assessments to  
17 the process and procedures used by private insur-  
18 ance companies following a major disaster.

19 (2) A review of training provided to individuals  
20 conducting preliminary damage assessments.

21 (3) A comparison of damage estimates for  
22 homes owned by individuals above the national me-  
23 dian income to homes owned by individuals at or  
24 below the national median income.

1 **SEC. 14. APPLICABILITY.**

2       The amendments made by sections 4, 5, 7, 8, and  
3 11 shall only apply to amounts appropriated on or after  
4 the date of enactment of this Act.

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