

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1245

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

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 12, 2025

Mr. EDWARDS (for himself, Ms. TITUS, Mr. CARTER of Louisiana, Ms. TOKUDA, Mr. SHERMAN, and Mr. NEGUSE) 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

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 2025”.

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.
- Sec. 15. GAO report to Congress on challenges under public assistance alternative procedures.

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, and in ac-
 18 cordance with applicable laws, regulations, and

1 the privacy and data protections provided under
2 this section; and

3 (C) support the detection, prevention, and
4 investigation of waste, fraud, abuse, or discrimi-
5 nation in the administration of disaster assist-
6 ance programs.

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

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

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

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

1 (C) allows for the distribution to applicants
2 of information about additional recovery re-
3 sources that may be available in a disaster
4 stricken area;

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

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

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

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

23 (2) The Secretary of Homeland Security pub-
24 lishes a privacy impact assessment for the unified
25 disaster application system, in accordance with sec-

tion 208(b)(1)(B) of the E-Government Act of 2002
(44 U.S.C. 3501 note).

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

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

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

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

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

1 (C) the disaster assistance agencies and
2 block grant recipients that will be granted ac-
3 cess to the additional information to carry out
4 the purposes of any disaster assistance pro-
5 gram.

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

20 (3) WAIVER OF INFORMATION COLLECTION RE-
21 QUIREMENTS.—

22 (A) IN GENERAL.—Upon the declaration of
23 a major disaster or emergency pursuant to sec-
24 tions 401 or 501 of the Robert T. Stafford Dis-
25 aster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42

1 U.S.C. 5170; 5191) by the President, the Ad-
2 ministrator may waive the requirements of sub-
3 chapter I of chapter 35 of title 44, United
4 States Code, with respect to voluntary collection
5 of information for the entire period of perform-
6 ance for any assistance provided under a dis-
7 aster assistance program.

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

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

19 (ii) update the information relating to
20 such waiver, as applicable.

21 (4) GAO REVIEW OF WAIVER OF INFORMATION
22 COLLECTION REQUIREMENTS.—

23 (A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year
24 after the date of enactment of this Act, the
25 Comptroller General of the United States shall

1 issue a report describing the benefits and poten-
2 tial risks associated with authorizing the waiver
3 of the information collection requirements de-
4 scribed in paragraph (3).

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

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

12 (ii) affect the consistent application of
13 Federal laws relating to—

14 (I) privacy and confidentiality;

15 (II) security of information; and

16 (III) access to information; and

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

21 (d) USE BY OTHER FEDERAL AGENCIES.—

22 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator may per-
23 mit a Federal agency other than a disaster assist-
24 ance agency listed in subparagraphs (A) through
25 (D) of subsection (f)(3) to use the unified disaster

1 application system established under subsection (a)
2 for the purpose of facilitating disaster-related assist-
3 ance if such agency enters into an agreement con-
4 taining the terms described in paragraph (2).

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

8 (A) The Federal agency shall—

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

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

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

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

1 (ii) cooperate fully with the Adminis-
2 trator in the investigation and remediation
3 of any such disclosure;

4 (iii) cooperate fully in the prosecution
5 of a person responsible for such disclosure;
6 and

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

16 (I) caused, directly or indirectly,
17 by the acts or omissions of officers,
18 employees, and contractors of the
19 agency; or

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

1 (3) PUBLICATION OF AGENCY AGREEMENT.—

2 The Administrator shall publish an agency agree-
3 ment entered into under this subsection on the same
4 website as the unified disaster application system es-
5 tablished under subsection (a).

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

11 (1) shall not be—

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

14 (B) subject to the remaining computer
15 matching provisions of section 552a of such
16 title; and

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

19 (f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

20 (1) APPLICANT.—The term “applicant”
21 means—

22 (A) a person who applies for disaster as-
23 sistance from a disaster assistance program;
24 and

1 (B) a person on whose behalf a person de-
2 scribed in subparagraph (A) has applied for dis-
3 aster assistance.

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

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

11 (A) the Federal Emergency Management
12 Agency;

13 (B) the Department of Housing and
14 Urban Development;

15 (C) the Small Business Administration;

16 (D) the Department of Agriculture; and

17 (E) any other Federal agency that the Ad-
18 ministrator permits to use the unified disaster
19 application system under subsection (d).

20 (4) DISASTER ASSISTANCE INFORMATION.—The
21 term “disaster assistance information” includes any
22 personal, demographic, biographical, geographical,
23 financial information, or other information that a
24 disaster assistance agency or block grant recipient is
25 authorized to collect, maintain, share, or use to proc-

1 ess an application for disaster assistance or other-
2 wise carry out a disaster assistance program.

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

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

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

16 (i) assistance for activities related to
17 disaster relief, long-term recovery, restora-
18 tion of infrastructure and housing, eco-
19 nomic revitalization, and mitigation that
20 are authorized under title I of the Housing
21 and Community Development Act of 1974
22 (42 U.S.C. 5301 et seq.);

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

1 (iii) the distribution of food benefit al-
2 lotments as authorized under section 412
3 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief
4 and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C.
5 5179) and section 5(h) of the Food Stamp
6 Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 2014(h)).

7 **SEC. 3. UNIVERSAL APPLICATION FOR INDIVIDUAL ASSIST-**
8 **ANCE.**

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

14 (b) CONSULTATION AND SUPPORT.—

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

18 (A) The Director of the Office of Manage-
19 ment and Budget.

20 (B) The Administrator of the Small Busi-
21 ness Administration.

22 (C) The Secretary of Housing and Urban
23 Development.

24 (D) The Secretary of Agriculture.

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

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

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

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

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

22 (A) the prevalence of improper and poten-
23 tially fraudulent Federal disaster assistance for
24 individuals made to registrants who used invalid

1 information to apply for disaster assistance, in-
2 cluding through identity theft;

3 (B) the number of disaster survivors whose
4 claims for Federal disaster assistance for indi-
5 viduals were denied due to another individual
6 filing a fraudulent application using their per-
7 sonal identifying information;

8 (C) the adequacy of existing fraud preven-
9 tion protocols in place on the Federal Emer-
10 gency Management Agency’s online application
11 for Federal disaster assistance for individuals;
12 and

13 (D) recommendations for improving the
14 identity verification protocols in place for Fed-
15 eral disaster assistance for individuals.

16 **SEC. 4. REPAIR AND REBUILDING.**

17 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 408(b)(1) of the Robert
18 T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act
19 (42 U.S.C. 5174(b)(1)) is amended—

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

22 (2) by striking “uninhabitable, as a result of
23 damage caused by a major disaster” and inserting
24 “damaged by a major disaster”.

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

4 (1) in subsection (c) by adding at the end the
5 following:

6 “(5) HAZARD MITIGATION.—

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

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

21 (A) in paragraph (1) by inserting “, finan-
22 cial assistance for hazard mitigation under sub-
23 section (c)(5)(A),” after “subsection
24 (c)(1)(A)(i)”;

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

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

5 “(5) HAZARD MITIGATION.—The maximum fi-
6 nancial assistance any individual or household may
7 receive under subsection (c)(5) shall be equivalent to
8 the amount set forth in paragraph (1) with respect
9 to a single major disaster.”.

10 **SEC. 5. DIRECT ASSISTANCE.**

11 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 408(c) of the Robert T.
12 Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act
13 (42 U.S.C. 5174(c)) is further amended by striking para-
14 graph (2) and inserting the following:

15 “(2) REPAIRS.—

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

24 “(B) DIRECT ASSISTANCE FOR REPAIRS.—

1 “(i) IN GENERAL.—The President
2 may provide direct assistance to individuals
3 and households who are unable to make
4 use of financial assistance under subpara-
5 graph (A) and when there is a lack of
6 available resources, for—

7 “(I) the repair of owner-occupied
8 private residences, utilities, and resi-
9 dential infrastructure (such as a pri-
10 vate access route) damaged by a
11 major disaster, or with respect to indi-
12 viduals with disabilities, rendered in-
13 accessible by a disaster; and

14 “(II) eligible hazard mitigation
15 measures that reduce the likelihood
16 and future damage to such residences,
17 utilities, and infrastructure.

18 “(ii) ELIGIBILITY.—A recipient of as-
19 sistance under this subparagraph shall not
20 be eligible for assistance under paragraph
21 (1), unless otherwise determined by the
22 Administrator.

23 “(C) RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER ASSIST-
24 ANCE.—A recipient of assistance provided
25 under this paragraph shall not be required to

1 show that the assistance can be met through
 2 other means, except insurance proceeds.”.

3 (b) STATE- OR INDIAN TRIBAL GOVERNMENT-AD-
 4 MINISTERED ASSISTANCE AND OTHER NEEDS ASSIST-
 5 ANCE.—Section 408(f) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster
 6 Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5174(f))
 7 is amended—

8 (1) by striking “subsections (c)(1)(B), (c)(4),
 9 and (e)” each place it appears and inserting “para-
 10 graphs (1)(B), (2)(B), and (4) of subsection (c) and
 11 subsection (e)”; and

12 (2) in paragraph (3)(A) by striking “subsection
 13 (c)(1)(B), (c)(4), or (e)” and inserting “paragraph
 14 (1)(B), (2)(B), or (4) of subsection (c) or subsection
 15 (e)”.

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

17 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 408 of the Robert T.
 18 Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act
 19 (42 U.S.C. 5174) is amended—

20 (1) in subsection (f)(3)—

21 (A) in subparagraph (A)—

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

24 “(i) IN GENERAL.—A State”; and

1 (ii) by adding at the end the fol-
2 lowing:

3 “(ii) TRANSPARENCY.—The President
4 shall make public the criteria used to
5 evaluate applications under clause (i) and
6 determine if a State or Indian tribal gov-
7 ernment meets the criteria described in
8 subparagraph (B) to administer grants de-
9 scribed in paragraph (1)(A).”;
10 (B) in subparagraph (C)(ii)—

11 (i) in subclause (I) by striking “;
12 and” and inserting a semicolon;

13 (ii) in subclause (II) by striking the
14 period at the end and inserting a semi-
15 colon; and

16 (iii) by adding at the end the fol-
17 lowing:

18 “(III) outline the approach of the
19 State to help disaster survivors create
20 a permanent housing plan; and

21 “(IV) outline the approach of the
22 State to provide individual disaster
23 survivors some choice of communities
24 and properties, as practicable.”;

25 (C) by striking subparagraph (F);

1 (D) by redesignating subparagraphs (G),
2 (H), (I), and (J) as subparagraphs (F), (G),
3 (H), and (I), respectively; and

4 (E) in subparagraph (I), as so redesign-
5 nated—

6 (i) in clause (ii) by striking “Not later
7 than 2 years after the date of enactment
8 of this paragraph, the” and inserting
9 “The”; and

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

12 (2) in subsection (g)—

13 (A) in paragraph (1) by striking “para-
14 graph (2)” and inserting “paragraphs (2) and
15 (3)”; and

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

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

21 (b) GAO ASSESSMENT.—Upon the expiration of the
22 authority to carry out section 408(f) of the Robert T.
23 Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act
24 (42 U.S.C. 5174(f)) as a pilot program, the Comptroller
25 General of the United States shall issue a report on the

1 effectiveness, successes, and challenges of any pilot pro-
2 gram carried out pursuant to such section and make rec-
3 ommendations on how to improve the provision of assist-
4 ance under such section.

5 **SEC. 7. MANAGEMENT COSTS.**

6 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 324(b)(2) of the Robert
7 T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act
8 (42 U.S.C. 5165b(b)(2)) is amended by adding at the end
9 the following:

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

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

20 (b) ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS.—Section 408(f)(1) of
21 the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency As-
22 sistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5174), as amended by section 5(b)
23 of this Act, is amended—

1 (1) by striking “(A) GRANT TO STATE.—” and
 2 all that follows through “subsection (g),” and insert-
 3 ing “Subject to subsection (g),”; and
 4 (2) by striking subparagraph (B).

5 **SEC. 8. FUNDING FOR ONLINE GUIDES FOR POST-DISASTER**
 6 **ASSISTANCE.**

7 (a) USE OF SERVICES OF OTHER AGENCIES.—Sec-
 8 tion 201(a) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and
 9 Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5131(a)) is amend-
 10 ed—

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

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

14 “(8) post-disaster assistance.”.

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

19 “(e) FUNDING FOR ONLINE GUIDES FOR ASSIST-
 20 ANCE.—

21 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the
 22 Federal Emergency Management Agency may pro-
 23 vide funding to a State agency established under
 24 subsection (c) to establish, update, or operate a
 25 website to provide information relating to post-dis-

1 aster recovery funding and resources to a community
2 or an individual impacted by a major disaster or
3 emergency.

4 “(2) MANAGEMENT.—A website created under
5 this subsection shall be—

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

7 “(B) suitable for the residents of the State
8 of the State agency.

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

13 “(A) A list of Federal, State, and local
14 sources of post-disaster recovery funding or as-
15 sistance that may be available to a community
16 after a major disaster or emergency.

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

21 “(C) A technical guide that lists and ex-
22 plains the costs and benefits of alternatives
23 available to a community to mitigate the im-
24 pacts of a major disaster or emergency and pre-

1 pare for sequential hazards such as flooding
2 after a wildfire.

3 “(4) COOPERATION.—A State agency that re-
4 ceives funding under this subsection shall cooperate
5 with the Secretary of the Interior, the Secretary of
6 Agriculture, the Secretary of Housing and Urban
7 Development, the Administrator of the Small Busi-
8 ness Administration, and the Administrator of the
9 Federal Emergency Management Agency in devel-
10 oping a website under this subsection.

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

15 **SEC. 9. INDIVIDUAL ASSISTANCE DASHBOARD.**

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

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

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

1 “(1) The number of applications for assistance
2 under section 408, including a description of the
3 number of applications for assistance related to
4 housing under such section and the number of appli-
5 cations for assistance to address other needs under
6 section 408(e).

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

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

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

14 “(5) If available, the dollar amount of assist-
15 ance provided pursuant to section 408 to applicants
16 who are—

17 “(A) property owners with a household an-
18 nual income—

19 “(i) above the national median house-
20 hold income; and

21 “(ii) below the national median house-
22 hold income; and

23 “(B) renters with a household annual in-
24 come—

1 “(i) above the national median house-
2 hold income; and

3 “(ii) below the national median house-
4 hold income.

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

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

10 “(b) PERSONALLY IDENTIFIABLE INFORMATION.—
11 The Administrator shall ensure that none of the informa-
12 tion published under subsection (a) contains the personally
13 identifiable information of an applicant.”.

14 **SEC. 10. FEMA REPORTS.**

15 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the
16 date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the
17 Federal Emergency Management Agency shall submit to
18 the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of
19 the House of Representatives and the Committee on
20 Homeland Security and Government Affairs of the Senate
21 a report with respect to fiscal year 2016 through the most
22 recent fiscal year ending before the date of enactment of
23 this Act, and an annual report for any fiscal year begin-
24 ning on or after the date of enactment of this Act, describ-
25 ing—

1 (1) the average amount of individual assistance
2 and individual and household assistance provided
3 under section 408 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster
4 Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C.
5 5121 et seq.) to, and the rate of denial of individual
6 assistance and individual and household assistance
7 provided under such section for—

8 (A) all individuals;

9 (B) households;

10 (C) individuals and households with a re-
11 ported annual income under 75 percent of the
12 national median household income;

13 (D) individuals with a reported annual in-
14 come over 125 percent of the national median
15 household income; and

16 (E) individuals with a reported annual in-
17 come between 75 percent and 125 percent of
18 the national median household income; and

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

22 (b) INFORMATION REQUIRED.—In the report sub-
23 mitted under subsection (a), the Administrator shall de-
24 scribe the number of homeowners and the number of rent-
25 ers for each category of individuals and households de-

1 scribed in subparagraphs (C) through (E) of subsection
2 (a)(1).

3 **SEC. 11. SHELTERING OF EMERGENCY RESPONSE PER-**
4 **SONNEL.**

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

8 “(e) SHELTERING OF EMERGENCY RESPONSE PER-
9 SONNEL.—

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

24 “(2) LIMITATION OF ASSISTANCE.—

1 “(A) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator
2 may only reimburse a State, tribal, or local gov-
3 ernment for the costs of sheltering emergency
4 response personnel under paragraph (1) for
5 such a period of time as the Administrator de-
6 termines reasonable based in the individual
7 characteristics of and impacts to the affected
8 area, including the extent of damage, the avail-
9 ability of alternative housing options, the avail-
10 ability of utilities, and disruptions to transpor-
11 tation infrastructure.

12 “(B) MAXIMUM DURATION OF REIMBURSE-
13 MENT.—The period of reimbursement under
14 subparagraph (A) may not exceed the 6-month
15 period beginning on the date on which the inci-
16 dent period ends.

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

19 “(A) employees or contracted employees
20 providing law enforcement, fire suppression,
21 rescue, emergency medical, emergency manage-
22 ment, or emergency communications services;
23 and

24 “(B) elected officials, except members of
25 Congress, responsible for the overseeing or di-

1 recting emergency response operations or recov-
2 ery activities.”.

3 **SEC. 12. IMPROVED RENTAL ASSISTANCE.**

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

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

20 (c) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Upon completion of the
21 activities carried out under subsection (b), the Adminis-
22 trator shall submit to the Committee on Transportation
23 and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and
24 the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental

1 Affairs of the Senate a report containing the study and
2 recommendations required under subsection (b).

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

7 **SEC. 13. GAO REPORT ON PRELIMINARY DAMAGE ASSESS-**
8 **MENTS.**

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

17 (b) CONTENTS.—The Comptroller General shall in-
18 clude in the study conducted under subsection (a) the fol-
19 lowing:

20 (1) A comparison of the process and procedures
21 used by the Federal Emergency Management Agen-
22 cy to complete preliminary damage assessments to
23 the process and procedures used by private insur-
24 ance companies following a major disaster.

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

3 (3) A comparison of damage estimates for
4 homes owned by individuals above the national me-
5 dian income to homes owned by individuals at or
6 below the national median income.

7 **SEC. 14. APPLICABILITY.**

8 The amendments made by sections 4, 5, 7, 8, and
9 11 shall only apply to amounts appropriated on or after
10 the date of enactment of this Act.

11 **SEC. 15. GAO REPORT TO CONGRESS ON CHALLENGES**
12 **UNDER PUBLIC ASSISTANCE ALTERNATIVE**
13 **PROCEDURES.**

14 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Comptroller General of the
15 United States shall conduct a study on the challenges to
16 States and Territories of the United States in obtaining
17 assistance under section 428 of the Robert T. Stafford
18 Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C.
19 5189f).

20 (b) CONTENTS.—In conducting the study described
21 in subsection (a), the Comptroller General shall study the
22 challenges for assistance described in subsection (a) faced
23 by the following:

1 (1) Rural areas, as such term is defined in sec-
2 tion 423 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief
3 and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5189a).

4 (2) Small impoverished communities, as such
5 term is defined in section 203 of such Act.

6 (3) Other communities, areas, or individuals
7 that the Comptroller General determines pertinent.

8 (c) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 1 year
9 after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller
10 General shall submit to Congress a report describing the
11 results of the study required under subsection (a).

○