



2023 Legislative & Policy Priorities

Emergency Management Performance Grant

The successes and accomplishments of the Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG) program are well-documented and measurable, and the program is an invaluable tool for local and state emergency management practitioners. Congress should continue to build emergency management capability and infrastructure at the state, local, and tribal levels by increasing funding for EMPG. To sustain the investments made during COVID with regular appropriations and supplementals, Congress should codify one of the supplemental increases and fund EMPG at \$455 million in FY24.

Disaster Relief Fund

The Disaster Relief Fund was created by Congress to support eligible response and recovery efforts associated with domestic major disasters and emergencies that overwhelm state resources. COVID-related reimbursements are rapidly draining the DRF, with very little in reserve right before hurricane and fire season. In order to maintain its liquidity, Congress must fund the DRF in a predictable way — as it was pre-COVID — to ensure adequate resources are available to support state and local governments when the next major disaster occurs.

Disaster Survivor Fairness Act

The Disaster Survivor Fairness Act, if enacted, would be the first major update of Individual Assistance in years. The legislation includes a series of reforms that will improve disaster assistance programs and survivor outcomes by 1) Creating a universal application for federal disaster assistance and enabling federal agencies to share relevant disaster assistance information with each other; 2) expanding FEMA's ability to fund mitigation and repair projects for disaster-damaged homes; 3) requiring FEMA to develop new post-disaster solutions for renters; 4) supporting efforts to shelter working emergency response personnel immediately following a disaster.

Universal Application

The House and Senate are both working on legislation to create a universal application for federal disaster assistance and enabling federal agencies to share relevant disaster assistance information with each other. This common-sense reform would make the process for applying for assistance from FEMA, HUD, SBA, HHS, and other federal agencies significantly easier for disaster survivors and would provide federal agencies the shareable data they need to process claims in a more timely fashion.

PAHPA Reauthorization

The Pandemic All-Hazards Preparedness Act (PAHPA) is the backbone of our nation's health security, providing the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) with authorities for preparing the healthcare and public health systems for public health emergencies, including pandemics and bioterrorist attacks. PAHPA is set to expire in September of this year, setting in motion the first reauthorization of the law since COVID. Reauthorization of PAHPA will give policymakers a unique and transformative opportunity to incorporate lessons learned from COVID into the law so that our public health systems are better prepared for the next public health emergency. Congress should work to complete PAHPA reauthorization before current authority expires on September 30, 2023.

READI Act

The Real Emergency Access for Aging and Disability Inclusion for Disasters Act (READI Act) would establish two new grant programs...one for emergency preparation and hazard mitigation, and the other for research, training, and technical assistance. IAEM supports the creation of these two much-needed grant programs, but the Government Affairs Committee, in consultation with the Access and Whole Community Inclusion Caucus, continues to have concerns about the bill. IAEM will continue working with Capitol Hill and disability advocates to produce legislation that can ensure operational improvements at the local level.

National Weather Service

Capacity of the National Weather Service to provide support and cooperation to local emergency managers is critical to the safety of the communities we serve. Sufficient funding for NWS will allow the Service to support the emergency management community and provide decision support services during critical situations. Cuts in funding to the NWS will have a detrimental impact to the support the Service can provide to local emergency managers. IAEM strongly encourages Congress to support the President's budget request of \$1.38 billion, as well as support the other weather-related functions of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

National Flood Insurance Program Reauthorization

In December 2022, the President signed legislation passed by Congress extending the National Flood Insurance Program's (NFIP's) authorization to September 30, 2023. NFIP reauthorization is an opportunity for Congress to reduce the complexity of the program and strengthen the NFIP's financial framework so that the program can continue helping individuals and communities take the critical step of securing flood insurance. Congress should complete work on NFIP reauthorization before authority for the program lapses on September 30.

Training and Education

The President's budget request for Education, Training, and Exercises within FEMA Federal Assistance demonstrates continued support for building continuity and maintaining professionalism within the emergency management discipline. Congress should honor the President's budget request of \$32.5 million (a \$2 million increase over FY23) for EMI and urges Congress to appropriate an additional \$7 million in FY24 to implement key components of the EMI Anywhere initiative such as establishing a satellite campus in each FEMA region and advancing the thought leadership initiative.