



The Honorable Mike Johnson  
Speaker of the House  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer  
Senate Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries  
House Minority Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Senate Minority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

November 7, 2024

Dear Speaker Johnson, Majority Leader Schumer, Minority Leader Jeffries, and Minority Leader McConnell:

On behalf of the memberships of state and local governments, emergency management, and related associations, we urge you to support S. 3071/H.R. 7671, the *Disaster Management Costs Modernization Act*, and its inclusion on the Senate Hotline and House Suspension Calendars at the earliest possible convenience.

As disasters like Hurricanes Helene and Milton become increasingly common and destructive, it is more critical than ever to reduce administrative burden and streamline how state and local governments manage recovery funding provided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). This legislation accomplishes that goal, making it easier to manage and track disaster grants, including providing oversight of waste, fraud, and abuse. The bill's broad, bipartisan support is a testament to the transformative impact it will have on efforts to support long-term recovery and mitigation—all without providing new funding or establishing a new program.

Every year, emergency managers nationwide must coordinate billions of dollars in grants provided by FEMA for a wide range of federal disaster declarations. The federal government recognizes the significant burden associated with managing these grants, and FEMA regulations allow us to use a small percentage of the funding for management costs, which can help alleviate some of that burden. Unfortunately, current law limits these management costs to each specific disaster declaration, and regulations do not allow grantees to work more efficiently by managing workloads across all open disasters. This bill would change the inefficient status quo by enabling us to consolidate management functions and utilize management costs across all open disasters. Not only will this incentivize faster

disaster close-out and drive down the costs of disasters, it will also better enable emergency managers to manage smaller disasters without a large FEMA footprint, thereby allowing FEMA to focus their resources on catastrophic events.

Furthermore, the legislation will also allow state and local governments with more robust recovery and mitigation capacity to assist others with infrequent declarations—and, therefore, less capacity—through programs such as the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC). Promoting capacity building at the state and local levels and relying less on private contractors is vital to ensure that the nation is more resilient for the disasters of the future.

The state and local emergency management community and impacted sectors of the economy are facing unprecedented challenges, and we urge you to act. This bill represents a rare opportunity to greatly simplify how our nation manages disasters and promote increased capacity building nationwide, without new spending by the federal government. The bill was ordered to be reported by the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee by a 58 to 2 vote on September 25, 2024, and it received similar bipartisan support in the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee. We appreciate you considering lending your support to this bill and adding it to your floor schedule at the earliest possible opportunity.

Sincerely,

Association of State Floodplain Managers  
Big City Emergency Managers  
BuildStrong America  
Council of State Governments  
International Association of Emergency Managers  
International City/County Management Association  
National Association of Counties  
National Conference of State Legislatures  
National Emergency Management Association  
National League of Cities  
National Special Districts Coalition  
National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster  
The United States Conference of Mayors

cc: Representative Steve Scalise, House Majority Leader  
Representative Tom Emmer, House Majority Whip  
Senator Richard Durbin, Senate Majority Whip  
Representative Katherine Clark, House Democratic Whip  
Senator John Thune, Senate Republican Whip  
Senator Gary Peters, Chairman, Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee  
Representative Sam Graves, Chairman, Transportation & Infrastructure Committee  
Senator Rand Paul, Ranking Member, Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee  
Representative Rick Larsen, Ranking Member, Transportation & Infrastructure Committee