
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 271 Session of
2023

INTRODUCED BY HOGAN, PICKETT, KAZEEM, DONAHUE, CIRESI AND
GILLEN, NOVEMBER 30, 2023

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON VETERANS AFFAIRS AND EMERGENCY
PREPAREDNESS, NOVEMBER 30, 2023

A RESOLUTION

1 Urging the Congress of the United States to adequately and
2 immediately replenish the Federal Emergency Management
3 Agency's Disaster Relief Fund.

4 WHEREAS, The Disaster Relief Fund is an appropriation against
5 which the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) can direct,
6 coordinate, manage and fund eligible response and recovery
7 efforts associated with domestic major disasters and emergencies
8 that overwhelm state resources; and

9 WHEREAS, The Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency
10 Assistance Act (Stafford Act) authorizes the President to issue
11 major disaster or emergency declarations in response to
12 catastrophes that overwhelm state and local governments; and

13 WHEREAS, Congress appropriates money to the Disaster Relief
14 Fund for disaster assistance authorized by the Stafford Act,
15 which is administered by FEMA within the Department of Homeland
16 Security and these appropriations remain available until
17 expended; and

18 WHEREAS, Through the Disaster Relief Fund, FEMA can fund

1 authorized Federal disaster support activities as well as
2 eligible state, territorial, tribal and local actions, including
3 providing emergency protection and debris removal; and

4 WHEREAS, The Disaster Relief Fund also results in the
5 distribution of a wide range of Federal aid for the repair and
6 restoration of qualifying disaster-damaged public
7 infrastructure, hazard mitigation initiatives, financial
8 assistance to eligible disaster survivors and Fire Management
9 Assistance Grants for qualifying large forest or grassland
10 wildfires; and

11 WHEREAS, Pennsylvania has received FEMA disaster relief
12 funding on multiple occasions, including Pennsylvania Remnants
13 of Hurricane Ida (4618-DR-PA), Pennsylvania Covid-19 Pandemic
14 (DR-4506-PA) and (EM-3441-PA), Pennsylvania Severe Storms and
15 Flooding (DR-4408-PA) and (DR-4292-PA), Pennsylvania Severe
16 Winter Storm and Snowstorm (DR-4267-PA), Pennsylvania Severe
17 Storms, Tornadoes and Flooding (DR-4149-PA) and Pennsylvania
18 Hurricane Sandy (DR-4099-PA); and

19 WHEREAS, This year has seen a record-breaking number of
20 billion-dollar weather disasters, which have put a strain on
21 FEMA's resources; and

22 WHEREAS, The agency has tallied 15 weather-related disasters
23 that have each exceeded \$1 billion in damages; and

24 WHEREAS, Congress has given \$16 billion in funding to the
25 Disaster Relief Fund under a 45-day continuing resolution on
26 September 30, 2023; and

27 WHEREAS, The Disaster Relief Fund remains in desperate need
28 of funding since prior to the enactment of the continuing
29 resolution FEMA projected a deficit of several billion dollars;
30 and

1 WHEREAS, The fund will most likely continue to face financial
2 strain despite the \$16 billion in supplemental funding; and

3 WHEREAS, The stress on the Disaster Relief Fund will remain
4 even as the Federal Government continues to respond to the
5 devastating fires in Hawaii and faces an ongoing hurricane
6 season; and

7 WHEREAS, Prior to the continuing resolution, FEMA was forced
8 to restrict disaster spending due to low funds and available
9 funding could only be used for "critical response efforts" and
10 not rebuilding; and

11 WHEREAS, The Disaster Relief Fund could conceivably face
12 exhaustion despite the supplemental funding added in the
13 continuing resolution and the restrictions may still be
14 necessary due to the current disaster environment; and

15 WHEREAS, If FEMA does not receive sufficient funding from
16 Congress, the possibility that the Federal Government's ability
17 to respond to national disasters will be compromised and the
18 burden will shift to state and local budgets, which face limited
19 resources themselves; and

20 WHEREAS, Pennsylvania requires and depends on equal access
21 and opportunity to the Disaster Relief Fund following a declared
22 disaster; and

23 WHEREAS, The Disaster Relief Fund also plays a crucial role
24 in providing financial assistance to this Commonwealth during
25 times of disaster; and

26 WHEREAS, It has been instrumental in Pennsylvania's efforts
27 to rebuild, repair and sustain infrastructure; therefore be it

28 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the
29 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania urge the Congress of the United
30 States to adequately and immediately replenish the Federal

1 Emergency Management Agency's Disaster Relief Fund; and be it
2 further

3 RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be transmitted to
4 the presiding officers of each house of Congress, each member of
5 Congress from Pennsylvania, the Governor of Pennsylvania and to
6 the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency.