

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 437

To amend the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to expand assistance related to winter storms, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 15, 2025

Mr. KENNEDY of New York introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

A BILL

To amend the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to expand assistance related to winter storms, 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.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Support Neighbor-
5 hoods Offset Winter Damage Act of 2025” or the “SNOW
6 Act of 2025”.

7 **SEC. 2. WINTER STORMS.**

8 (a) USE OF ASSISTANCE FOR WINTER STORMS.—
9 Section 404 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and

1 Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170c) is amended
2 by adding at the end the following:

3 “(h) USE OF ASSISTANCE FOR WINTER STORMS.—
4 Recipients of hazard mitigation assistance provided under
5 this section and section 203 may use the assistance to con-
6 duct activities to help reduce the risk of future damage,
7 hardship, loss, or suffering in any area affected by a win-
8 ter storm, including acquiring equipment to remove snow.

9 “(i) WINTER STORM DEFINED.—In this section, the
10 term ‘winter storm’ means a combination of heavy snow,
11 blowing snow, or dangerous wind chills, as determined by
12 the Administrator.”.

13 (b) WAIVER OF SNOWFALL METHODOLOGY AND
14 DAMAGES REQUIREMENT.—The Administrator of the
15 Federal Emergency Management Agency shall, by rule, es-
16 tablish a process to waive the methodology related to the
17 amount of snowfall required to declare a winter storm eli-
18 gible for a major disaster declaration and to waive the
19 statewide total damages required for such eligibility, if at
20 least 2 of the following conditions are met for a response
21 zone or region affected by a winter storm:

22 (1) A State emergency management agency de-
23 termines in writing that the damages of such winter
24 storm exceed the damages required for such State to

1 issue a disaster declaration for such a response zone
2 or region.

3 (2) The National Weather Service determines
4 that, during such winter storm, such a response zone
5 or region has experienced—

6 (A) wind speeds that are greater than 58
7 miles per hour and a wind chill below 0 degrees
8 Fahrenheit; or

9 (B) lake-effect snow and conditions for
10 more than 24 hours.

11 (3) The Bureau of the Census determines that
12 such a response zone or region—

13 (A) represents a population for which the
14 real median household income is below the real
15 median household income in the United States;
16 or

17 (B) is an area that is not an urban area.

18 (c) REGULATIONS RELATED TO WINTER STORMS.—

19 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the
20 Federal Emergency Management Agency shall issue
21 such regulations, as may be necessary or appro-
22 priate, as follows:

23 (A) To provide assistance for winter
24 storms authorized under sections 402, 403,
25 406, 407, 418, 419, 421(d), 502, and 503 of

the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and
Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170a,
5170b, 5172, 5173, 5185, 5186, 5188(d),
5192, 5193) related to the following:

(i) Debris removal.

(ii) Roads and bridges.

(iii) Water control facilities.

(iv) Public buildings and contents.

(v) Public utilities.

(vi) Parks, recreational, and other facilities.

(B) To provide assistance for winter storms authorized under sections 408 and 503 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5174, 5193) when the State emergency management agency determines that the magnitude or estimated threat of an incident in a response zone or region exceeds the capacity of the State or local government (as such term is defined in section 102 of such Act (42 U.S.C. 5122)) with jurisdiction over such response zone or region to respond or recover.

(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

1 (1) RESPONSE ZONE OR REGION.—The term
 2 “response zone or region” means an area that a
 3 State emergency management agency has listed as a
 4 response zone or region for the purpose of deter-
 5 mining any damages required for such State to issue
 6 a disaster declaration.

7 (2) WINTER STORM.—The term “winter storm”
 8 has the meaning given in section 404(i) of the Rob-
 9 ert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency As-
 10 sistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170c(i)), as added by sub-
 11 section (a) of this section.

12 **SEC. 3. FEDERAL COST SHARE.**

13 The Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emer-
 14 gency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170 et seq.) is amend-
 15 ed—

16 (1) in section 403—

17 (A) by amending subsection (b) to read as
 18 follows:

19 “(b) FEDERAL SHARE.—

20 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Federal share of as-
 21 sistance under this section shall be not less than 75
 22 percent of the eligible cost of such assistance.

23 “(2) RURAL OR DISADVANTAGED AREAS.—Not-
 24 withstanding paragraph (1), the Federal share of as-
 25 sistance under this section shall be not less than 90

1 percent of the eligible cost of such assistance in a
 2 rural or disadvantaged area.”; and

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

4 “(e) RURAL OR DISADVANTAGED AREA DEFINED.—

5 In this section, the term ‘rural or disadvantaged area’
 6 means an area that the Bureau of the Census has deter-
 7 mined—

8 “(1) represents a population for which the real
 9 median household income is below the real median
 10 household income in the United States; or

11 “(2) is not an urban area.”;

12 (2) in section 404—

13 (A) by striking “(a) IN GENERAL.—The
 14 President” and inserting the following:

15 “(a) FEDERAL SHARE.—

16 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The President”; and

17 (B) in subsection (a), by adding at the end
 18 the following:

19 “(2) DISADVANTAGED URBAN COMMUNITIES.—

20 Notwithstanding paragraph (1), the President may
 21 contribute up to 90 percent of the cost of hazard
 22 mitigation measures which the President has deter-
 23 mined are cost effective and which substantially re-
 24 duce the risk of, or increase resilience to, future
 25 damage, hardship, loss, or suffering in a rural or

1 disadvantaged area (as such term is defined in sec-
2 tion 403) affected by a major disaster, or by a fire
3 for which assistance was provided under section 420.
4 Such measures shall be identified following the eval-
5 uation of natural hazards under section 322 and
6 shall be subject to approval by the President. Sub-
7 ject to section 322, the total of contributions under
8 this section for a major disaster or event under sec-
9 tion 420 shall not exceed 15 percent for amounts
10 not more than \$2,000,000,000, 10 percent for
11 amounts of more than \$2,000,000,000 and not more
12 than \$10,000,000,000, and 7.5 percent on amounts
13 of more than \$10,000,000,000 and not more than
14 \$35,333,000,000 of the estimated aggregate amount
15 of grants to be made (less any associated adminis-
16 trative costs) under this Act with respect to the
17 major disaster or event under section 420.”;

18 (3) by amending section 407(d) to read as fol-
19 lows:

20 “(d) FEDERAL SHARE.—

21 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Federal share of as-
22 sistance under this section shall be not less than 75
23 percent of the eligible cost of debris and wreckage
24 removal carried out under this section.

1 “(2) RURAL OR DISADVANTAGED AREAS.—Not-
 2 withstanding paragraph (1), the Federal share of as-
 3 sistance under this section shall be not less than 90
 4 percent of the eligible cost of debris and wreckage
 5 removal carried out under this section in a rural or
 6 disadvantaged area (as such term is defined in sec-
 7 tion 403).”; and

8 (4) by amending section 503(a) to read as fol-
 9 lows:

10 “(a) FEDERAL SHARE.—

11 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Federal share for as-
 12 sistance provided under this title shall be equal to
 13 not less than 75 percent of the eligible costs.

14 “(2) RURAL OR DISADVANTAGED AREAS.—Not-
 15 withstanding paragraph (1), the Federal share of as-
 16 sistance under this title shall be not less than 90
 17 percent of the eligible costs in a rural or disadvan-
 18 taged area (as such term is defined in section
 19 403).”.

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