

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 4408

To study the effectiveness of disaster response and recovery in noncontiguous communities, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 15, 2025

Ms. KING-HINDS introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

A BILL

To study the effectiveness of disaster response and recovery in noncontiguous communities, 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 “Understanding Non-
5 contiguous Infrastructure and Threats Year-round Act”
6 or the “UNITY Act”.

7 **SEC. 2. IMPROVING DISASTER WORKFORCE RETENTION IN**
8 **NONCONTIGUOUS COMMUNITIES.**

9 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the Federal
10 Emergency Management Agency shall conduct a study on

1 the effectiveness of practices of the Agency relating to hir-
2 ing, recruitment, and retention in noncontiguous commu-
3 nities by soliciting feedback from staff in such commu-
4 nities.

5 (b) CONTENTS.—In conducting the study under sub-
6 section (a), the Administrator shall—

7 (1) evaluate the recruitment strategies of the
8 Agency and efforts of the Agency to broaden the
9 pool of qualified local candidates;

10 (2) prioritize input from communities in which
11 there are the most severe staffing shortages; and

12 (3) identify specific steps that the Agency can
13 take to improve opportunities for staff in noncontig-
14 uous communities.

15 (c) BRIEFING.—Not later than 6 months after the
16 date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall
17 brief the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
18 and the Committee on Homeland Security of the House
19 of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Secu-
20 rity and Governmental Affairs of the Senate on the results
21 of the study conducted under subsection (a).

22 (d) POLICIES.—The Administrator shall take such
23 actions as are necessary to revise any policies, guidance,
24 or regulations of the Agency to address the disaster work-

1 force challenges in noncontiguous communities identified
2 in the study conducted under subsection (a).

3 **SEC. 3. GAO REVIEW OF DISASTER RESPONSE AND RECOV-**
4 **ERY IN NONCONTIGUOUS COMMUNITIES.**

5 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Comptroller General of the
6 United States shall conduct a study on the effectiveness
7 of disaster response and recovery practices in noncontig-
8 uous communities, with a particular focus on recovery ef-
9 forts relating to damage caused by Super Typhoon Yutu,
10 and compare such practices with the disaster response and
11 recovery practices in contiguous communities.

12 (b) CONTENTS.—In conducting the study under sub-
13 section (a), the Comptroller General shall—

14 (1) analyze ongoing recovery efforts from disas-
15 ters that have impacted noncontiguous communities;

16 (2) analyze the level of coordination between
17 the Federal Departments and Agencies tasked with
18 disaster response and recovery;

19 (3) assess how effectively Federal agencies co-
20 ordinate with State emergency management offices;

21 (4) assess the effectiveness of the Area offices
22 and Regional Advisory Councils of the Agency in as-
23 sisting noncontiguous communities; and

1 (5) make recommendations on how to improve
2 the disaster response and recovery outcomes in non-
3 contiguous communities.

4 (c) REPORT.—Not later than 18 months after the
5 date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General
6 shall submit to the Committee on Transportation and In-
7 frastructure and the Committee on Homeland Security of
8 the House of Representatives and the Committee on
9 Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Sen-
10 ate a report on the study conducted under subsection (a).

11 **SEC. 4. PRELIMINARY DAMAGE ASSESSMENT PILOT PRO-**
12 **GRAM.**

13 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 1 year after
14 the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of
15 the Federal Emergency Management Agency shall estab-
16 lish a pilot program to implement new technology in car-
17 rying out a preliminary damage assessment in a non-
18 contiguous community in which a major disaster has been
19 declared under section 401 of the Robert T. Stafford Dis-
20 aster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C.
21 5170).

22 (b) PRIORITY.—In carrying out the pilot program es-
23 tablished under subsection (a), the Administrator shall en-
24 sure that the most geographically remote noncontiguous
25 communities are prioritized.

1 (c) BRIEFING.—Not later than 3 years after the date
2 of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall brief the
3 Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and the
4 Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Rep-
5 resentatives and the Committee on Homeland Security
6 and Governmental Affairs of the Senate on the implemen-
7 tation of the pilot program established under subsection
8 (a).

9 (d) SUNSET.—The pilot program established under
10 subsection (a) shall terminate on September 30, 2030.

○