

119TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# S. 270

To establish a Commission on Federal Natural Disaster Resilience and Recovery to examine and recommend reforms to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Federal Government’s approach to natural disaster resilience and recovery, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JANUARY 28, 2025

Mr. LANKFORD introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

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## A BILL

To establish a Commission on Federal Natural Disaster Resilience and Recovery to examine and recommend reforms to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Federal Government’s approach to natural disaster resilience and recovery, 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 “Natural Disaster Resil-  
5 ience and Recovery Accountability Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. COMMISSION ON FEDERAL NATURAL DISASTER RE-**  
2 **SILIENCE AND RECOVERY.**

3 (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

4 (1) COMMISSION.—The term “Commission”  
5 means the Commission on Federal Natural Disaster  
6 Resilience and Recovery established under subsection  
7 (b).

8 (2) DIRECTOR.—The term “Director” means  
9 the Director of the Office.

10 (3) NATURAL DISASTER.—The term “natural  
11 disaster” means—

12 (A) a weather event relating to cold or hot  
13 weather, flood, earthquake, tornado, hurricane,  
14 or ice storm; and

15 (B) an event meeting such other criteria as  
16 the Commission may determine appropriate.

17 (4) OFFICE.—The term “Office” means the Of-  
18 fice of Management and Budget.

19 (b) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established within  
20 the Office a Commission on Federal Natural Disaster Re-  
21 silience and Recovery.

22 (c) DUTIES.—The duties of the Commission shall be  
23 to examine and recommend administrative and legislative  
24 reforms to improve the efficiency, effectiveness, and budg-  
25 et funding of programs and activities of Federal agencies  
26 supporting natural disaster resilience and recovery.

1 (d) MEMBERSHIP.—

2 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Commission shall be  
3 composed of 15 members appointed by the Direc-  
4 tor—

5 (A) of which 1 shall be an employee of the  
6 Office; and

7 (B) the remainder of which, to the extent  
8 practicable—

9 (i) shall be an official, emergency  
10 manager, or emergency response provider  
11 from a State, local, or Tribal government,  
12 the private sector, or a nongovernmental  
13 organization;

14 (ii) shall represent multiple geo-  
15 graphic (including urban and rural) areas;  
16 and

17 (iii) may include—

18 (I) individuals from the emer-  
19 gency management field and emer-  
20 gency response providers, including  
21 fire service, law enforcement, haz-  
22 ardous materials response, emergency  
23 medical services, and emergency man-  
24 agement personnel, or organizations  
25 representing such individuals;

1 (II) health scientists, emergency  
2 and inpatient medical providers, and  
3 public health professionals;

4 (III) experts from the Federal  
5 Government and State, local, and  
6 Tribal governments and the private  
7 sector that represent standards-set-  
8 ting and accrediting organizations, in-  
9 cluding representatives from the vol-  
10 untary consensus codes and standards  
11 development community, particularly  
12 individuals with expertise in the emer-  
13 gency preparedness and response  
14 field;

15 (IV) State, local, and Tribal gov-  
16 ernmental officials with expertise in  
17 preparedness, protection, response, re-  
18 covery, and mitigation, including adju-  
19 tants general;

20 (V) elected State, local, and Trib-  
21 al governmental executives;

22 (VI) experts in public and private  
23 sector infrastructure protection, cyber-  
24 security, and communications;

1 (VII) representatives of individ-  
2 uals with disabilities and other popu-  
3 lations with special needs; and

4 (VIII) such other individuals as  
5 the Director determines appropriate.

6 (2) EXPERTISE.—In making appointments  
7 under paragraph (1), the Director shall give consid-  
8 eration to individuals with expertise in—

9 (A) natural disaster resilience and recov-  
10 ery;

11 (B) emergency management at the Fed-  
12 eral, State, local, territorial or Tribal level;

13 (C) critical infrastructure;

14 (D) transportation;

15 (E) housing; and

16 (F) intergovernmental relations.

17 (3) APPOINTMENT DEADLINE.—All appoint-  
18 ments to the Commission shall be made not later  
19 than 120 days after the date of enactment of this  
20 Act.

21 (4) CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR.—The Commission  
22 shall have a chair and vice chair. The chair shall be  
23 a member of the Commission elected by an affirma-  
24 tive vote of not less than 8 members of the Commis-

1 sion, and the vice chair shall be the Commission  
2 member who is an employee of the Office.

3 (5) COMPENSATION.—

4 (A) IN GENERAL.—A member of the Com-  
5 mission who is not an officer or employee of the  
6 Federal Government—

7 (i) shall not be considered a Federal  
8 employee for any purpose other than for  
9 purposes of—

10 (I) chapter 81 of title 5, United  
11 States Code (relating to compensation  
12 for injury); and

13 (II) sections 2671 through 2680  
14 of title 28, United States Code, (relat-  
15 ing to tort claims); and

16 (ii) shall be allowed travel expenses,  
17 including per diem in lieu of subsistence,  
18 at rates authorized for employees of agen-  
19 cies under subchapter I of chapter 57 of  
20 title 5, United States Code, while away  
21 from their homes or regular places of busi-  
22 ness in the performance of services for the  
23 Commission.

24 (B) FEDERAL EMPLOYEES.—A member of  
25 the Commission who is an officer or employee

1 of the Federal Government shall not receive any  
2 additional compensation for service as such a  
3 member.

4 (e) ADMINISTRATION.—

5 (1) MEETINGS.—

6 (A) FIRST MEETING.—The Commission  
7 shall first meet not later than 240 days after  
8 the date of the enactment of this Act.

9 (B) OTHER MATTERS.—The Commission  
10 may, for the purpose of carrying out this Act,  
11 meet virtually or in-person to hold hearings, sit  
12 and act at times and places, take testimony,  
13 and receive evidence as the Commission con-  
14 siders appropriate.

15 (2) EXECUTIVE BRANCH ASSISTANCE.—The  
16 heads of the following Federal agencies shall advise  
17 and consult with the Commission on matters within  
18 the respective areas of responsibility of the Federal  
19 agency:

20 (A) The Small Business Administration.

21 (B) The Department of Agriculture.

22 (C) The Department of Homeland Secu-  
23 rity.

24 (D) The Department of Labor.

25 (E) The Department of the Interior.

1 (F) The Department of Energy.

2 (G) The Department of Transportation.

3 (H) The Department of Housing and  
4 Urban Development.

5 (I) The Environmental Protection Agency.

6 (J) The Department of Justice.

7 (K) The Federal Emergency Management  
8 Agency.

9 (L) The United States Army Corps of En-  
10 gineers.

11 (M) The Corporation for National and  
12 Community Service.

13 (N) The Department of Commerce.

14 (O) The Department of the Treasury.

15 (P) The Office.

16 (Q) Any other Federal agency, as deter-  
17 mined by the Commission.

18 (3) INFORMATION FROM FEDERAL AGENCIES.—

19 The Commission may request from any Federal  
20 agency such information as the Commission con-  
21 siders necessary to carry out its duties. Upon re-  
22 quest of the chair of the Commission, the head of a  
23 Federal agency shall furnish such information to the  
24 Commission.

1           (4) POSTAL SERVICES.—The Commission may  
2 use the United States mails in the same manner and  
3 under the same conditions as other departments and  
4 agencies of the Federal Government.

5           (5) RULES OF PROCEDURE.—The chair and  
6 vice chair of the Commission shall, with an affirma-  
7 tive vote of not less than 8 members of the Commis-  
8 sion, establish written rules of procedure for the  
9 Commission, which shall include a quorum require-  
10 ment to conduct official business.

11           (6) STAFF.—

12           (A) IN GENERAL.—The chair of the Com-  
13 mission may, without regard to the civil service  
14 laws and regulations, appoint and terminate  
15 support personnel as may be necessary to en-  
16 able the Commission to perform the duties of  
17 the Commission.

18           (B) EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR.—The Commis-  
19 sion, by an affirmative vote of not less than 8  
20 members of the Commission, shall appoint an  
21 executive director of the Commission.

22           (C) COMPENSATION.—The chair of the  
23 Commission may fix the compensation of the  
24 executive director and other personnel without  
25 regard to chapter 51 and subchapter III of

1 chapter 53 of title 5, United States Code, relat-  
2 ing to classification of positions and General  
3 Schedule pay rates, except that the rate of pay  
4 for the executive director and other personnel  
5 may not exceed the rate payable for level V of  
6 the Executive Schedule under section 5316 of  
7 such title.

8 (D) DETAIL OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOY-  
9 EES.—A Federal Government employee may be  
10 detailed to the Commission, without reimburse-  
11 ment, and such detail shall be without interrup-  
12 tion or loss of civil service status or privilege.

13 (f) REPORTS.—

14 (1) FINAL REPORT.—Not later than 2 years  
15 after the date of the first meeting of the Commis-  
16 sion, the Commission shall submit to the Committee  
17 on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of  
18 the Senate and the Committee on Oversight and  
19 Government Reform of the House of Representatives  
20 a report describing recommendations to improve the  
21 Federal Government’s approach to natural disaster  
22 resilience and recovery. Such report shall include the  
23 following:

24 (A) Specific and actionable policy rec-  
25 ommendations, including legislative rec-

1           ommendations, as applicable, to improve the ef-  
2           fectiveness of the Federal approach to natural  
3           disaster resilience and recovery, including con-  
4           sideration of the 11 options presented in the re-  
5           port of the Government Accountability Office  
6           entitled “Disaster Recovery: Actions Needed to  
7           Improve the Federal Approach”, issued on No-  
8           vember 15, 2022 (GAO–23–104956).

9           (B) A comprehensive review all federally  
10          funded activities, Federal financial assistance  
11          and grants, and Federal agency programs re-  
12          lated to natural disaster resilience and recovery  
13          using, to the extent practical, data systems and  
14          metrics consistently across the Federal agen-  
15          cies, including budget information and the Fed-  
16          eral program inventory established under sec-  
17          tion 1122(a)(2)(B)(i) of title 31, United States  
18          Code, in order to evaluate the effectiveness of  
19          such activities and programs to meet estab-  
20          lished goals and statutory requirements.

21          (C) A complete list of all federally funded  
22          natural disaster resilience and recovery pro-  
23          grams and activities and prior funding informa-  
24          tion, program goals, statutory authority of such  
25          programs and activities with relevant law cita-

1           tions, and reference to related financial assist-  
2           ance and grant programs.

3           (D) Consideration of potential administra-  
4           tive changes to the roles and responsibilities of  
5           the various Federal agencies involved in natural  
6           disaster resilience and recovery.

7           (E) Policies that aim to improve the effi-  
8           ciency and effectiveness of the Federal Govern-  
9           ment's approach to natural disaster resilience  
10          and recovery, to increase the access and efficacy  
11          of respective Federal programs to all impacted  
12          individuals and entities, and to recommend ap-  
13          propriate investments in natural disaster resil-  
14          ience to reduce duplication and inefficiency.

15          (F) Other areas of natural disaster resil-  
16          ience and recovery that are not described in this  
17          section, as determined by the Commission.

18          (2) SPECIFIC POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS.—To  
19          the maximum extent practicable, the report under  
20          paragraph (1) shall include specific short-term and  
21          long-term legislative and administrative policy rec-  
22          ommendations.

23          (3) INTERIM REPORTS.—Not later than 180  
24          days after the date of enactment of this Act, and  
25          every 180 days thereafter, the Commission shall sub-

1 mit to the Committee on Homeland Security and  
2 Governmental Affairs of the Senate and the Com-  
3 mittee on Oversight and Government Reform of the  
4 House of Representatives an interim report relating  
5 to any matter described in paragraph (1).

6 (g) TERMINATION.—The Commission shall terminate  
7 on the date that is 60 days after the date on which the  
8 Commission submits the report required under subsection  
9 (f)(1).

10 (h) USE OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Amounts used to  
11 carry out this section shall be derived solely from amounts  
12 otherwise appropriated to the Office, and no additional  
13 funds are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this  
14 Act.

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