



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

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

The Honorable Sam Graves, Chairman
 Transportation & Infrastructure Committee
 U.S. House of Representatives
 Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Rick Larsen, Ranking Member
 Transportation & Infrastructure Committee
 U.S. House of Representatives
 Washington, D.C. 20515

November 12, 2024

Dear Speaker Johnson, Minority Leader Jeffries, Chairman Graves, and Ranking Member Larsen:

We are writing to express our support for and to urge you to quickly pass the *Disaster Assistance Simplification Act*. This bill requires the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to consolidate federal grant applications for disaster relief for disaster survivors into one centralized and universal application, relieving survivors from the burden of multiple long and strenuous application processes.

Last year, the nation yet again set a new record for the most \$1 billion disasters, and we may be on track to break that record yet again. Recently, two major hurricanes have hit the southeast region of the United States, Hurricanes Milton and Helene, causing tragic loss of life and the destruction of countless homes and businesses. Unfortunately, the United States experiences many natural disasters annually, but the *Disaster Assistance Simplification Act* can help to significantly alleviate the burden of survivors navigating the federal relief process.

There are many types of federal assistance available to disaster survivors from different federal agencies. Due to this, survivors seeking financial assistance from various entities after a natural disaster must repeatedly and unnecessarily answer the same application questions, while experiencing extreme financial and emotional hardship. These detailed applications are incredibly time consuming and can take weeks or

even months, in a situation where time is of the essence. Survivors can become so overwhelmed with the process that they simply give up before receiving the aid they so desperately need.

In its report on improving the federal approach to disaster recovery, the Government Accountability Office identified consolidating the process into one application as an option to improve the federal government's approach to disaster recovery. This bipartisan bill, led by the Senators Gary Peters (D-MI), Rand Paul (R-KY), James Lankford (R-OK) and Thom Tillis (R-NC) passed the Senate unanimously in July 2023. We urge you to take action and get this bill signed into law before the end of the Congress.

Sincerely,

American Flood Coalition Action
Association of State Floodplain Managers
Big City Emergency Managers
Bipartisan Policy Center Action
BuildStrong America
Disaster Housing Recovery Coalition
Environmental Defense Fund
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 Low Income Housing Coalition
National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster
National Wildlife Federation
SBP
Team Rubicon

cc: Representative Tom Emmer, House Majority Whip
Representative Katherine Clark, House Democratic Whip