

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 1579

To require Congress to budget in advance for disasters, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 21, 2019

Mr. ROMNEY (for himself, Mr. LEE, Mr. BRAUN, and Mr. TOOMEY) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on the Budget

A BILL

To require Congress to budget in advance for disasters, 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 “Budgeting for Disas-
5 ters Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. TERMINATION OF EXEMPTIONS FROM THE ANNUAL**
7 **BUDGET CAPS.**

8 Subparagraphs (D) and (F) of section 251(b)(2) of
9 the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act

1 of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 901(b)(2)) shall not apply with respect
2 to fiscal year 2020, or any fiscal year thereafter.

3 **SEC. 3. EMERGENCY SPENDING POINT OF ORDER.**

4 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 314(e)(2) of the Congres-
5 sional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 645(e)(2)) is amend-
6 ed by striking “three-fifths” each place it appears and in-
7 serting “two-thirds”.

8 (b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by
9 subsection (a) shall—

10 (1) take effect on the date of enactment of this
11 Act; and

12 (2) apply with respect to fiscal year 2020, and
13 each fiscal year thereafter.

14 **SEC. 4. GAO REVIEW OF EMERGENCY SPENDING.**

15 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the
16 date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General
17 of the United States shall submit to Congress a report
18 that—

19 (1) reviews amounts appropriated for each of
20 fiscal years 2009 through 2018 that were—

21 (A) designated as being for an emergency
22 requirement;

23 (B) designated as being for disaster relief;

24 or

1 (C) made available to provide assistance
2 under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief
3 and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121
4 et seq.);

5 (2) identifies and reviews amounts appropriated
6 for any of fiscal years 2009 through 2018 that were
7 designated as being for an emergency requirement
8 and designated as being for disaster relief; and

9 (3) provide recommendations to—

10 (A) clarify the definition of emergency re-
11 quirements for purposes of appropriated
12 amounts being designated as being for an emer-
13 gency requirement;

14 (B) implement an appropriate time limit
15 for recipients to spend appropriated amounts
16 that are designated as being for an emergency
17 requirement;

18 (C) improve cost-sharing relating to major
19 disasters and emergencies among Federal,
20 State, and local governments; and

21 (D) improve forecasting and budgeting for
22 appropriations for emergency requirements and
23 disaster relief.

24 (b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

1 (1) the term “emergency” means an emergency
2 declared by the President under section 501 of the
3 Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency
4 Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5191);

5 (2) the term “designated as being for an emer-
6 gency requirement”, with respect to amounts appro-
7 priated, means that the amounts are designated as
8 an emergency requirement pursuant to—

9 (A) section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Bal-
10 anced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control
11 Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 901(b)(2)(A)(i)); or

12 (B) a provision of a concurrent resolution
13 on the budget;

14 (3) the term “designated as being for disaster
15 relief”, with respect to amounts appropriated, means
16 that the amounts are designated as being for dis-
17 aster relief pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(D) of the
18 Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control
19 Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 901(b)(2)(D)); and

20 (4) the term “major disaster” means a major
21 disaster declared by the President under section 401
22 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emer-
23 gency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170).

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