

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. RES. 1035

Condemning Federal workforce reductions that undermine preparedness, response, and recovery, and expressing concern regarding proposed future staffing cuts to the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 3, 2026

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi (for himself, Mr. KENNEDY of New York, Mr. SWALWELL, Mr. CORREA, Mr. THANEDAR, Mr. GOLDMAN of New York, Mrs. McIVER, Ms. JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. HERNÁNDEZ, Ms. POU, Mr. WALKINSHAW, Mr. CARTER of Louisiana, Mr. GREEN of Texas, Ms. NORTON, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, Mr. CLEAVER, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Ms. TITUS, Mr. BEYER, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. CASE, Mr. MFUME, Mr. MULLIN, Ms. SALINAS, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. BELL, and Mr. SUBRAMANYAM) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and in addition to the Committee on Homeland Security, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

RESOLUTION

Condemning Federal workforce reductions that undermine preparedness, response, and recovery, and expressing concern regarding proposed future staffing cuts to the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Whereas, in 1979, President Jimmy Carter signed Executive Order 12127, which established the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA);

Whereas FEMA’s mission is to serve the American public by helping people before, during, and after disasters;

Whereas FEMA’s ability to fulfill its mission depends on a stable, efficiently managed, and adequately resourced workforce across disaster preparedness, response, recovery, mitigation, and support functions;

Whereas the Government Accountability Office (GAO) has repeatedly reported that for many years FEMA has operated with chronic staffing shortages, relying on sustained overtime, temporary staff surges, and extended deployments to fulfill its mission;

Whereas GAO has reported that staffing shortages have at times compromised FEMA’s ability to respond to disasters, such as during the aftermath of Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria, and the wildfires in California, that occurred concurrently in 2017;

Whereas major disasters, such as Hurricanes Andrew, Katrina, Rita, Sandy, Harvey, Irma, and Maria, revealed severe deficiencies in Federal disaster staffing, prompting reforms to strengthen FEMA’s hiring, deployment, and workforce capacity;

Whereas the Nation faces increasingly frequent and severe disasters, placing unprecedented demands on FEMA personnel;

Whereas for several years FEMA had been incrementally increasing its workforce to address the increase in disasters and existing staffing gaps, but those efforts were reversed in 2025 when the Trump Administration caused a steep drop in staffing levels;

Whereas recent workforce reductions and firings carried out by the Trump Administration have resulted in at least

2,000 permanent staff leaving FEMA and exacerbated the impacts of FEMA's longstanding staffing shortages;

Whereas GAO added Federal delivery of disaster assistance to its high-risk list in 2025—in part due to a 35 percent staffing shortage at FEMA—indicating that increasing FEMA's staffing levels should be one of the Federal Government's highest priorities;

Whereas recently reported internal planning and discussions led by the Department of Homeland Security and FEMA officials have created significant instability by contemplating substantially deeper workforce reductions at FEMA;

Whereas such workforce reductions, if implemented, would significantly delay disaster response, slow recovery, and reduce assistance to communities following disasters, including impacting ongoing recovery operations relating to Hurricane Helene, flooding in Central Texas, and wildfires in California;

Whereas FEMA employees perform essential public service under demanding and often hazardous conditions, and workforce instability undermines morale and retention;

Whereas the loss of experienced personnel and institutional knowledge at FEMA weakens long-term preparedness, continuity of operations, and emergency management expertise across the Federal Government;

Whereas effective disaster response and recovery require strong coordination among Federal, State, local, Tribal, and territorial governments, and is dependent on a fully staffed FEMA;

Whereas rural communities, coastal States, wildfire-prone regions, and small towns often depend most heavily on timely Federal disaster response and recovery assistance;

Whereas delays in disaster response and recovery increase overall Federal costs, prolong displacement, and raise long-term rebuilding expenses for taxpayers, undermining efficient and responsible use of Federal funds;

Whereas FEMA administers the National Flood Insurance Program, which depends on experienced Federal staff to ensure that families whose homes have been damaged by floods are paid fairly and that communities can reduce future flood risk;

Whereas in addition to leading the Nation's natural disaster response, FEMA employees support critical programs that were established in the wake of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks;

Whereas FEMA employees play a key role in ensuring that first responders, State, local, Tribal, and territorial governments, and nonprofit organizations can build and sustain capabilities related to mitigating, preventing, and responding to acts of terrorism;

Whereas FEMA employees provide indispensable technical expertise and administration of counterterrorism grants, such as the Urban Area Security Initiative, State Homeland Security Program, and the Nonprofit Security Grant Program, which protect and support lifesaving frontline responders, such as emergency medical services, firefighters, and law enforcement personnel;

Whereas these counterterrorism grants strategically allocate Federal resources to enable State, local, Tribal, and territorial governments to increase the resilience of such gov-

ernments against natural and man-made threats, including acts of terrorism, thereby enabling the Department of Homeland Security to carry out its mission to safeguard the American people; and

Whereas Congress has a responsibility to ensure that FEMA has the personnel and resources necessary to carry out its mission in service of communities: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2 (1) condemns the current and future proposed
3 workforce reductions at FEMA, which will endanger
4 the Nation’s capacity to prepare for, respond to, and
5 recover from disasters, both natural and manmade;

6 (2) expresses grave concern that such workforce
7 reductions blatantly disregard the lessons of deadly
8 storms, such as Hurricanes Andrew, Katrina, Sandy,
9 Harvey, Maria, and Helene, and Winter Storm Eliott,
10 and will compromise the ability of State, local,
11 Tribal, and territorial governments to protect lives
12 and property during future disasters;

13 (3) denounces any such workforce reductions
14 that will dangerously weaken the Nation’s ability to
15 prevent, prepare for, and respond to acts of terrorism,
16 including by undermining counterterrorism
17 grant programs that protect and support lifesaving
18 frontline responders, such as emergency medical

1 services, firefighters, and law enforcement personnel,
2 nonprofit organizations, and high-risk communities;

3 (4) disapproves of any reckless cuts to FEMA's
4 workforce by the Trump Administration that would
5 result in compromising FEMA's ability to maintain
6 sufficient staffing, surge capacity, and institutional
7 expertise to effectively respond to disasters and sup-
8 port survivors; and

9 (5) commits to supporting a stable, adequately
10 resourced FEMA workforce to ensure timely and ef-
11 fective disaster preparedness, response, and recovery
12 for communities across the Nation.

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