

POST-DISASTER ASSISTANCE ONLINE ACCOUNTABILITY
 ACT

JULY 23, 2019.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of
 the Union and ordered to be printed

Mr. DEFAZIO, from the Committee on Transportation and
 Infrastructure, submitted the following

R E P O R T

[To accompany H.R. 1307]

[Including cost estimate of the Congressional Budget Office]

The Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, to whom
 was referred the bill (H.R. 1307) to provide for an online repository
 for certain reporting requirements for recipients of Federal disaster
 assistance, and for other purposes, having considered the same, re-
 port favorably thereon without amendment and recommend that
 the bill do pass.

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PURPOSE OF LEGISLATION

The purpose of H.R. 1307, the Post-Disaster Assistance Online Accountability Act, is to provide for an online repository for certain reporting requirements for recipients of Federal disaster assistance.

BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR LEGISLATION

Multiple Federal departments and agencies—such as the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Small Business Administration (SBA), Office of Management and Budget (OMB), and Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)—deliver and track disaster assistance. Information regarding Federal spending and the progress of agency recovery projects is not currently available to the public in an accessible format. Improving the transparency of data related to the time-sensitive process of disaster recovery is essential to maintaining responsiveness on the part of the Federal Government.

The online spending tracker of the Federal Government—USASpending.gov—publishes the expenditures and disbursements of numerous executive branch programs. Spending and project information related to the majority of Federal disaster recovery programs are currently conspicuously absent from this list.

H.R. 1307 would establish a centralized online repository for the submission of details, updates, and expenditures of specific disaster recovery activities by Federal agencies. The bill would also make the submitted information publicly available through a subpage on USASpending.gov.

HEARINGS

For the purposes of section 103(i) of H. Res. 6 of the 116th Congress—

The following hearing was used to develop or consider H.R. 1307:

On February 26, 2019, the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure held a hearing entitled, “Examining How Federal Infrastructure Policy Could Help Mitigate and Adapt to Climate Change.” Witnesses included: Dr. Daniel Sperling, Board Member, California Air Resources Board; Mr. Ben Prochazka, Vice President, Electrification Coalition; Ms. Vicki Arroyo, Executive Director, Georgetown Climate Center; Mr. James M. Proctor, II, Senior Vice President and General Counsel, McWane, Inc., testifying on behalf of the Build Strong Coalition; Mr. Kevin DeGood, Director, Infrastructure Policy, Center for American Progress; Ms. Lynn Scarlett, Vice President, Policy and Government Affairs, The Nature Conservancy; and Dr. Whitley J. Saumweber, Director, Stephenson Ocean Security (SOS) Project, Center for Strategic and International Studies. Topics discussed included impacts of severe weather events and rising costs of federal response and recovery operations.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY AND CONSIDERATION

H.R. 1307 was introduced in the House on February 15, 2019, by Mr. Meadows and referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and in addition to the Committee on Small Business and the Committee on Financial Services. Within the Com-

mittee on Transportation and Infrastructure, H.R. 1307 was referred to the Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Management.

The Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Management was discharged from further consideration of H.R. 1307 on March 27, 2019.

The Full Committee met in open session to consider H.R. 1307 on March 27, 2019, and ordered the measure to be reported to the House with a favorable recommendation, without amendment, by voice vote with a quorum present.

COMMITTEE VOTES

Clause 3(b) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives requires each committee report to include the total number of votes cast for and against on each record vote on a motion to report and on any amendment offered to the measure or matter, and the names of those members voting for and against.

There were no recorded votes taken in connection with consideration of H.R. 1307.

COMMITTEE OVERSIGHT FINDINGS

With respect to the requirements of clause 3(c)(1) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Committee's oversight findings and recommendations are reflected in this report.

NEW BUDGET AUTHORITY AND TAX EXPENDITURES

Clause 3(c)(2) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives does not apply where a cost estimate and comparison prepared by the Director of the Congressional Budget Office under section 402 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 has been timely submitted prior to the filing of the report and is included in the report. Such a cost estimate is included in this report.

CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

With respect to the requirement of clause 3(c)(3) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives and section 402 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, the Committee has received the enclosed cost estimate for H.R. 1307 from the Director of the Congressional Budget Office:

U.S. CONGRESS,
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,
Washington, DC, May 16, 2019.

Hon. PETER A. DEFAZIO,
*Chairman, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.*

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: The Congressional Budget Office has prepared the enclosed cost estimate for H.R. 1307, the Post-Disaster Assistance Online Accountability Act.

If you wish further details on this estimate, we will be pleased to provide them. The CBO staff contact is Matthew Pickford.

Sincerely,

MARK P. HADLEY
(For Keith Hall, Director).

Enclosure.

H.R. 1307, Post-Disaster Assistance Online Accountability Act			
As ordered reported by the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure on March 27, 2019			
By Fiscal Year, Millions of Dollars	2019	2019-2024	2019-2029
Direct Spending (Outlays)	0	0	0
Revenues	0	0	0
Deficit Effect	0	0	0
Spending Subject to Appropriation (Outlays)	0	1	n.e.
Pay-as-you-go procedures apply?	No	Mandate Effects	
Increases on-budget deficits in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2030?	No	Contains intergovernmental mandate?	No
		Contains private-sector mandate?	No

n.e. = not estimated; * = between zero and \$500,000.

H.R. 1307 would require the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), to publish information each quarter on federal disaster assistance payments on the website www.usaspending.gov.

The website is an official source of information on spending by the federal government. CBO expects that OMB and federal agencies would incur some additional administrative costs to prepare and post timely reports on disaster assistance spending. CBO estimates that work would cost less than \$500,000 annually and would total \$1 million over the 2020–2024 period.

On May 14, 2019, CBO transmitted a cost estimate for H.R. 1307, the DISASTER Act, as ordered reported by the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure on May 8, 2019. The bills are similar, but H.R. 1307 would not be effective until 2022. That difference is reflected in the cost estimates for each bill.

The CBO staff contact for this estimate is Matthew Pickford. The estimate was reviewed by H. Samuel Papenfuss, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.

PERFORMANCE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

With respect to the requirement of clause 3(c)(4) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the performance goal and objective of this legislation is to provide for an online repository for certain reporting requirements for recipients of Federal disaster assistance.

DUPLICATION OF FEDERAL PROGRAMS

Pursuant to clause 3(c)(5) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Committee finds that no provision of H.R. 1307 establishes or reauthorizes a program of the federal government known to be duplicative of another federal program, a pro-

gram that was included in any report from the Government Accountability Office to Congress pursuant to section 21 of Public Law 111–139, or a program related to a program identified in the most recent Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance.

CONGRESSIONAL EARMARKS, LIMITED TAX BENEFITS, AND LIMITED
TARIFF BENEFITS

In compliance with clause 9 of rule XXI of the Rules of the House of Representatives, this bill, as reported, contains no congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9(e), 9(f), or 9(g) of the Rule XXI.

FEDERAL MANDATES STATEMENT

The Committee adopts as its own the estimate of federal mandates prepared by the Director of the Congressional Budget Office pursuant to section 423 of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (Public Law 104–4).

PREEMPTION CLARIFICATION

Section 423 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 requires the report of any Committee on a bill or joint resolution to include a statement on the extent to which the bill or joint resolution is intended to preempt state, local, or tribal law. The Committee finds that H.R. 1307 does not preempt any state, local, or tribal law.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE STATEMENT

No advisory committees within the meaning of section 5(b) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act were created by this legislation.

APPLICABILITY TO LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

The Committee finds that the legislation does not relate to the terms and conditions of employment or access to public services or accommodations within the meaning of section 102(b)(3) of the Congressional Accountability Act (Public Law 104–1).

SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS OF THE LEGISLATION

Section 1. Short title

This section provides that this bill may be cited as the “Post-Disaster Assistance Online Accountability Act”.

Sec. 2. Subpage for transparency of disaster assistance

This section directs the OMB Director to consult with the Secretary of the Treasury and the heads of agencies providing disaster assistance under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (Pub. L. 100–107) to establish a subpage on USASpending.gov for the publication of disaster assistance data by agencies providing such assistance. The Section also requires HUD, SBA, and other covered agencies to submit to the subpage 1) the total amount of disaster assistance provided during a quarter, 2) the amount of disaster assistance provided by the agency that was expended or obligated to projects or activities, and 3) a detailed list of all projects or activities for which disaster assistance dispersed

by the agency was expended, obligated, or used within 30 days of the end of a calendar quarter.

Sec. 3. Definitions

This section defines “covered federal agency,” “disaster assistance,” “eligible recipient,” and “specified natural disaster.”

CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW MADE BY THE BILL, AS REPORTED

As reported, H.R. 1307 makes no changes to existing law.

