

on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate.

“(d) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.—The comprehensive report developed under subsection (c) shall be made available to the public and posted on the website of the Federal Emergency Management Agency—

“(1) in pre-compressed, easily downloadable versions that are made available in all appropriate formats; and

“(2) in machine-readable format, if applicable.

“(e) SOURCES OF INFORMATION.—In preparing the comprehensive report, any publication, database, or web-based resource, and any information compiled by any government agency, nongovernmental organization, or other entity that is made available may be used.

“(f) BRIEFING.—Not later than 180 days after submission of the comprehensive report, the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, or a designee, and a member of the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency, or a designee, shall brief, upon request, the appropriate congressional committees on the findings and any recommendations made in the comprehensive report.”

(b) TECHNICAL AMENDMENT.—The item relating to section 1223 in the table of contents of the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018 (Public Law 115-254) is amended to read as follows:

“Sec. 1223. Study to streamline and consolidate information collection and preliminary damage assessments.”

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GRAVES) and the gentlewoman from Oregon (Ms. HOYLE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Missouri.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous material into the RECORD on H.R. 152.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Missouri?

There was no objection.

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 152, the Federal Disaster Assistance Coordination Act, is a commonsense bill that is going to streamline and consolidate the collection of information following a disaster.

While the Federal Emergency Management Agency is the lead Federal agency on disasters, there are often many Federal agencies involved in disaster response and recovery.

I have experienced firsthand just how frustrating it can be when these Federal agencies fail to work together following a natural disaster.

That is why I am proud to support H.R. 152, which would address this concern by amending the FEMA-led working group created in the Disaster Recovery Reform Act of 2018.

Specifically, the working group is going to develop a plan to make the collection of information from disaster survivors less burdensome, duplicative,

and time consuming. This working group is also going to coordinate with the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency to identify ways to reduce duplication and streamline the Federal damage assessment process.

I thank the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. EZELL) for his leadership on this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I urge support of this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. HOYLE of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of H.R. 152, the Federal Disaster Assistance Coordination Act.

This legislation amends the Disaster Recovery Reform Act to help Federal agencies streamline and consolidate information collection and preliminary damage assessments following disasters.

After a major disaster, there is no time to wait for bureaucracy. However, Federal recovery assistance following disasters is currently hampered by inefficient information collection and assessments conducted by multiple agencies.

This bill will remove information collection barriers that currently impede disaster aid. It creates a working group to identify duplicative assessments and propose their elimination.

Further, it would streamline Federal disaster recovery efforts by concluding that a single agency is sufficient to conduct damage assessments to account for the needs of disaster victims.

The Federal Government can and should be doing this smarter.

Mr. Speaker, I support this bill, and I urge my colleagues to do the same. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. EZELL), the bill's sponsor.

Mr. EZELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of my legislation, which aims to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of disaster assistance.

Unfortunately, none of us are strangers to the effects of natural disasters, and we have all had these problems in our hometowns.

Right now we are seeing how these events threaten lives, damage property, and strain local, State, and Federal resources.

In the aftermath, millions of Americans are left seeking help to rebuild their lives and their communities.

However, when seeking necessary Federal relief, applying for disaster assistance can be a frustrating and confusing process. This leads to delays, frustration, and even disqualification from receiving the aid.

This is where my bill comes in. H.R. 152 works to eliminate inefficiencies and expedite the application process by ensuring only one information submission is needed.

Survivors are already facing difficult circumstances, and the application process should not add to their stress.

H.R. 152 represents a crucial step forward toward achieving a more effective disaster recovery system that prioritizes the needs of Americans and ensures they receive the help in a timely manner. I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Ms. HOYLE of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, as stewards of taxpayer dollars, we need to ensure that we are spending our money as efficiently as possible.

Government should work. As we have seen in fires in Oregon, hurricanes in North Carolina and Florida, and currently the horrific fires in Los Angeles, when people suffer from a natural disaster, it is imperative that they get the help that they need. They have lost everything, and the last thing we should be doing is dragging them through duplicative bureaucracy.

That is why this bill is so important. This bipartisan bill passed the House on suspension in the 116th, 117th, and 118th Congresses. This bill will help disaster survivors by taking a step toward streamlining the Federal Government's fragmented approach to disaster assistance.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill, and, hopefully, the Senate will move it through. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, in closing, H.R. 152 is a good government bill that will help improve disaster recovery efforts. It has previously passed the House in the 116th, 117th, and 118th Congresses.

Mr. Speaker, I urge support for this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GRAVES) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 152.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

□ 1645

POST-DISASTER ASSISTANCE ONLINE ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 153) to provide for an online repository for certain reporting requirements for recipients of Federal disaster assistance, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 153

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Post-Disaster Assistance Online Accountability Act”.

SEC. 2. SUBPAGE FOR TRANSPARENCY OF DISASTER ASSISTANCE.

(a) **ESTABLISHMENT OF REPOSITORY FOR REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.**—The Director of the Office of Management and Budget, in consultation with the Secretary of the Treasury and the head of each covered Federal agency, shall establish a subpage within the website established under section 2 of the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 (31 U.S.C. 6101 note) to publish the information required to be made available to the public under this section.

(b) **SUBMISSION OF INFORMATION BY FEDERAL AGENCIES.**—Not later than 30 days after the end of a calendar quarter, each covered Federal agency that made disaster assistance available to an eligible recipient during such quarter shall, in coordination with the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, make available to the public on the subpage established under subsection (a) the information described in subsection (c), and ensure that any data asset of the agency is machine readable.

(c) **INFORMATION REQUIRED.**—The information described in this subsection is, with respect to disaster assistance provided by the covered Federal agency—

(1) the total amount of disaster assistance provided by the agency during such 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, including—

(A) the name of the project or activity;

(B) a description of the project or activity;

(C) an evaluation of the completion status of the project or activity;

(D) any award identification number assigned to the project;

(E) the Catalog for Disaster Assistance number assigned by the Federal Emergency Management Agency;

(F) the location of the project, including ZIP Codes; and

(G) any reporting requirement information being collected by a covered Federal agency with respect to that agency's disaster assistance.

(d) **GUIDANCE.**—Each covered Federal agency, in coordination with the Director of the Office of Management and Budget and the Secretary of the Treasury, shall issue such guidance as is necessary to meet the requirements of this Act.

(e) **AGREEMENT WITH PRIVATE ENTITY.**—The Director, if necessary for purposes of transparency, may enter into an agreement with a private entity, including a nonprofit organization, to develop the subpage required under this section.

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act, the following definitions apply:

(1) **COVERED FEDERAL AGENCY.**—The term “covered Federal agency” means—

(A) any agency providing assistance under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.);

(B) the Small Business Administration; and

(C) the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

(2) **DISASTER ASSISTANCE.**—The term “disaster assistance” means any funds that are made available by the Federal Government in response to a specified natural disaster, including—

(A) any assistance provided by the Administrator of the Small Business Administration as a result of a disaster declared under section 7(b) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 636(b));

(B) any assistance provided by the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development for—

(i) activities authorized under title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 5301 et seq.) related to disaster relief, long-term recovery, restoration of infrastructure and housing, and economic revitalization in the most impacted and distressed areas resulting from a major disaster declared pursuant to the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.); and

(ii) flood insurance coverage provided under the National Flood Insurance Program pursuant to the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4001 et seq.); and

(C) any assistance provided under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.).

(3) **ELIGIBLE RECIPIENT.**—The term “eligible recipient”—

(A) means any entity that receives disaster assistance directly from the Federal Government (including disaster assistance received through grant, loan, or contract) other than an individual; and

(B) includes a State that receives disaster assistance.

(4) **SPECIFIED NATURAL DISASTER.**—The term “specified natural disaster” means—

(A) a fire on public or private forest land or grassland described in section 420 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5187);

(B) a major disaster declared by the President under section 401 of such Act (42 U.S.C. 5170);

(C) an emergency declared by the President under section 501 of such Act (42 U.S.C. 5191); and

(D) any other natural disaster for which a disaster declaration is made by the Federal Government.

The **SPEAKER** pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. **GRAVES**) and the gentleman from Oregon (Ms. **HOYLE**) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Missouri.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. **GRAVES**. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous material into the **RECORD** on H.R. 153.

The **SPEAKER** pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Missouri?

There was no objection.

Mr. **GRAVES**. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 153, the Post-Disaster Assistance Online Accountability Act, will increase transparency for post-disaster Federal assistance. H.R. 153 will do this by requiring agencies that provide Federal disaster assistance to update a central website quarterly with information on their disaster assistance programs. That way, the American taxpayer can see exactly where their hard-earned dollars are going.

H.R. 153 passed the House in the 116th, 117th, and 118th Congresses, and I urge continued support for this commonsense legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. **EZELL**) for his

leadership on this important legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. **HOYLE** of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 153. This bill would create a new online system for tracking Federal disaster projects and assistance.

People should know how and where their disaster funds are being spent without wading through reams of government paperwork. The legislation simplifies the data collection process for Federal disaster recovery projects. To increase transparency, this bill would also create a page on USAspending.gov where anyone can track agency disaster recovery activities and the amount of assistance expended by the agency on a quarterly basis.

Federal agencies need to be accountable to the victims of disasters and to the taxpayers who funded these agencies' really important work. We also need to allow Federal disaster victims peace of mind when they are at their most vulnerable.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join me and support this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. **GRAVES**. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. **EZELL**), who is the sponsor of the legislation.

Mr. **EZELL**. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak on my bill, H.R. 153, the Post-Disaster Assistance Online Accountability Act, which aims to improve transparency in the Federal disaster assistance process.

When disaster strikes, the priority is to save lives and to help communities recover. However, in doing so, one of the biggest challenges in the aftermath of a disaster is ensuring that aid is distributed fairly and timely to those who need it most.

Transparency builds trust in government. Without clear information, communities may feel left in the dark about how aid is being allocated. This is where the Post-Disaster Assistance Online Accountability Act comes in.

This bill requires FEMA to publicly share key information about the damage caused by disasters and how assistance is being distributed. It ensures the public can track recovery efforts in real time and understand how resources are being allocated. This helps communities, local governments, and organizations involved in recovery make more informed decisions.

The bill also mandates that FEMA provide detailed, easy-to-access data, such as the extent of the damage, the areas affected, and the estimated cost of recovery.

Ultimately, this bill holds FEMA and the government accountable to the American people. By strengthening trust, H.R. 153 is a vital step toward building a more transparent, responsive disaster recovery system.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Ms. HOYLE of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, the House passed this bipartisan bill on suspension in the 116th, 117th, and 118th Congresses. I look forward to the Senate taking up this bill, given how important it is with the massive natural disasters that we are seeing. I certainly hope that we in Congress fund the IT infrastructure so that we can get this done and get this done quickly.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, in closing, I hope we can continue to show support for this commonsense accountability measure. It is going to help improve transparency for Federal disaster spending.

Mr. Speaker, I urge support of the bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GRAVES) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 153.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

PROMOTING OPPORTUNITIES TO WIDEN ELECTRICAL RESILIENCE ACT OF 2025

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 164) to amend the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to authorize Federal agencies to provide certain essential assistance for hazard mitigation for electric utilities, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 164

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Promoting Opportunities to Widen Electrical Resilience Act of 2025" or the "POWER Act of 2025".

SEC. 2. ESSENTIAL ASSISTANCE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 403 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170b) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(e) ELECTRIC UTILITIES.—

"(1) HAZARD MITIGATION ACTIVITIES.—An electric utility may carry out cost-effective hazard mitigation activities jointly or otherwise in combination with activities for the restoration of power carried out with assistance provided under this section.

"(2) ELIGIBILITY FOR ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE.—In any case in which an electric utility facility receives assistance under this section for the emergency restoration of power, the receipt of such assistance shall not render such facility ineligible for any

hazard mitigation assistance under section 406 for which such facility is otherwise eligible."

(b) APPLICABILITY.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall only apply to amounts appropriated on or after the date of enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GRAVES) and the gentleman from Oregon (Ms. HOYLE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Missouri.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous material into the RECORD on H.R. 164.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Missouri?

There was no objection.

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, following a natural disaster, electric utilities work tirelessly to restore power to their customers. However, because of FEMA's problematic interpretation of section 403 of the Stafford Act, once power is restored, even with temporary measures, electric utilities are deemed ineligible for reimbursement for permanent work and mitigation efforts.

As a result, electric utilities are treated differently from all other critical infrastructure, even though building mitigation into our power systems reduces the costs of future disasters.

H.R. 164 is going to address this by clarifying that electric utilities may build in mitigation measures that provide essential assistance and that it does not disqualify electric utilities from permanent work eligibility later in the disaster recovery process.

Mr. Speaker, I urge support, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. HOYLE of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 164, my legislation with Representative EZELL. This bill empowers publicly owned electric utilities to implement hazard mitigation improvements during disaster recovery.

When disasters strike, they leave a trail of destruction, including damaged energy infrastructure that needs to be immediately repaired to restore power. At the same time, this can present an opportunity to improve the resilience of power infrastructure to reduce the risk of outages or fires in the future.

I have spoken with many FEMA employees, and they feel like they have their hands tied because of rules that are in place that prevent them from being able to fund investments in resilience and infrastructure.

As we are seeing more extreme weather because of climate change, we need to step up and spend taxpayer dollars more efficiently and better. That

means that we have to change this law because the current law prevents FEMA from reimbursing utilities for hazard mitigation as they make temporary disaster repairs. This leads to wasted opportunities, more frequent power outages, and higher costs passed on to ratepayers.

Commonsense solutions, like H.R. 164, are more critical than ever to keep energy costs low for American families. This bill maximizes FEMA's resources and helps communities protect critical infrastructure, leading to lower costs for utilities and families in the wake of future disasters. More importantly, it allows us to use taxpayer dollars to invest in resiliency as we are seeing more extreme weather coming at us every single day.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I want to publicly thank Representative HOYLE for her work on the bill. It is a great bill.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. EZELL).

Mr. EZELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak in favor of H.R. 164, the POWER Act, which would allow public electric utilities to implement cost-effective hazard mitigation activities as part of power restoration.

Public power utilities are essential in ensuring our communities have access to reliable and resilient electricity, especially in the aftermath of major disasters. Current law says that if States and localities get cost reimbursements from FEMA for certain disaster recovery activities, like restoring power, then that could make them ineligible for future hazard mitigation funds. Our communities should not have to make either-or decisions when it comes to restoring critical infrastructure in the wake of natural disasters.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to co-lead this bill alongside Representative HOYLE, and I encourage my colleagues to support its passage.

Ms. HOYLE of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, the costs of recovering from increasingly frequent severe weather events often raise the price of Americans' electric bills. This bill would help public power make their systems more resilient at the time of repair, increasing efficiency and cutting overall costs.

I can't think of a more important set of bills to be passing at this time as the first bills coming up on suspension. These bills invest in our infrastructure and help FEMA be more transparent and utilize taxpayer dollars more efficiently.

Again, I thank my colleague, Representative EZELL, for prioritizing and moving this bill forward.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, in closing, this legislation is going to provide a whole lot of needed clarity to ensure that electric utilities are not penalized