

Public Law 117–255
117th Congress

An Act

To require the President to develop and maintain products that show the risk of natural hazards across the United States, and for other purposes.

Dec. 20, 2022

[S. 3875]

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 “Community Disaster Resilience Zones Act of 2022”.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Section 101(b) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121(b)) is amended—

- (1) in paragraph (5), by striking “and” at the end;
- (2) in paragraph (6), by adding “; and” at the end; and
- (3) by adding at the end the following:

“(7) identifying and improving the climate and natural hazard resilience of vulnerable communities.”.

SEC. 3. NATURAL HAZARD RISK ASSESSMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Title II of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5131 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 206. NATURAL HAZARD RISK ASSESSMENT.

42 USC 5136.

“(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) COMMUNITY DISASTER RESILIENCE ZONE.—The term ‘community disaster resilience zone’ means a census tract designated by the President under subsection (d)(1).

“(2) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term ‘eligible entity’ means—

- “(A) a State;
- “(B) an Indian tribal government; or
- “(C) a local government.

“(b) PRODUCTS.—The President shall continue to maintain a natural hazard assessment program that develops and maintains products that—

- “(1) are available to the public; and
- “(2) define natural hazard risk across the United States.

“(c) FEATURES.—The products maintained under subsection (b) shall, for lands within States and areas under the jurisdiction of Indian tribal governments—

- “(1) show the risk of natural hazards; and
- “(2) include ratings and data for—
 - “(A) loss exposure, including population equivalence, buildings, and agriculture;
 - “(B) social vulnerability;

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“(C) community resilience; and

“(D) any other element determined by the President.

“(d) COMMUNITY DISASTER RESILIENCE ZONES DESIGNATION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 30 days after the date on which the President makes the update and enhancement required under subsection (e)(4), and not less frequently than every 5 years thereafter, the President shall identify and designate community disaster resilience zones, which shall be—

“(A) the 50 census tracts assigned the highest individual hazard risk ratings; and

“(B) subject to paragraph (3), in each State, not less than 1 percent of census tracts that are assigned high individual risk ratings.

“(2) RISK RATINGS.—In carrying out paragraph (1), the President shall use census tract risk ratings derived from a product maintained under subsection (b) that—

“(A) reflect—

“(i) high levels of individual hazard risk ratings based on an assessment of the intersection of—

“(I) loss to population equivalence;

“(II) building value; and

“(III) agriculture value;

“(ii) high social vulnerability ratings and low community resilience ratings; and

“(iii) any other elements determined by the President; and

“(B) reflect the principal natural hazard risks identified for the respective census tracts.

“(3) GEOGRAPHIC BALANCE.—In identifying and designating the community disaster resilience zones described in paragraph (1)(B)—

“(A) for the purpose of achieving geographic balance, when applicable, the President shall consider making designations in coastal, inland, urban, suburban, and rural areas; and

“(B) the President shall include census tracts on Tribal lands located within a State.

“(4) DURATION.—The designation of a community disaster resilience zone under paragraph (1) shall be effective for a period of not less than 5 years.

Deadlines.

“(e) REVIEW AND UPDATE.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of the Community Disaster Resilience Zones Act of 2022, and not less frequently than every 5 years thereafter, the President shall—

“(1) with respect to any product that is a natural hazard risk assessment—

“(A) review the underlying methodology of the product; and

“(B) receive public input on the methodology and data used for the product;

“(2) consider including additional data in any product that is a natural hazard risk assessment, such as—

“(A) the most recent census tract data;

“(B) data from the American Community Survey of the Bureau of the Census, a successor survey, a similar survey, or another data source, including data by census tract on housing characteristics and income;

“(C) information relating to development, improvements, and hazard mitigation measures;

“(D) data that assesses past and future loss exposure, including analysis on the effects of a changing climate on future loss exposure;

“(E) data from the Resilience Analysis and Planning Tool of the Federal Emergency Management Agency; and

“(F) other information relevant to prioritizing areas that have—

“(i) high risk levels of—

“(I) natural hazard loss exposure, including population equivalence, buildings, infrastructure, and agriculture; and

“(II) social vulnerability; and

“(ii) low levels of community resilience;

“(3) make publicly available any changes in methodology or data used to inform an update to a product maintained under subsection (b); and

“(4) update and enhance the products maintained under subsection (b), as necessary.

“(f) NATURAL HAZARD RISK ASSESSMENT INSIGHTS.—In determining additional data to include in products that are natural hazard risk assessments under subsection (e)(2), the President shall consult with, at a minimum—

“(1) the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency;

“(2) the Secretary of Agriculture and the Chief of the Forest Service;

“(3) the Secretary of Commerce, the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Director of the Bureau of the Census, and the Director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology;

“(4) the Secretary of Defense and the Commanding Officer of the United States Army Corps of Engineers;

“(5) the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency;

“(6) the Secretary of the Interior and the Director of the United States Geological Survey;

“(7) the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development; and

“(8) the Director of the Federal Housing Finance Agency.

“(g) COMMUNITY DISASTER RESILIENCE ZONE.—With respect to financial assistance provided under section 203(i) to perform a resilience or mitigation project within, or that primarily benefits, a community disaster resilience zone, the President may increase the amount of the Federal share described under section 203(h) to not more than 90 percent of the total cost of the resilience or mitigation project.

“(h) RESILIENCE OR MITIGATION PROJECT PLANNING ASSISTANCE.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The President may provide financial, technical, or other assistance under this title to an eligible entity that plans to perform a resilience or mitigation project within, or that primarily benefits, a community disaster resilience zone.

“(2) PURPOSE.—The purpose of assistance provided under paragraph (1) shall be to carry out activities in preparation

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for a resilience or mitigation project or seek an evaluation and certification under subsection (i)(2) for a resilience or mitigation project before the date on which permanent work of the resilience or mitigation project begins.

“(3) APPLICATION.—If required by the President, an eligible entity seeking assistance under paragraph (1) shall submit an application in accordance with subsection (i)(1).

“(4) FUNDING.—In providing assistance under paragraph (1), the President may use amounts set aside under section 203(i).

“(i) COMMUNITY DISASTER RESILIENCE ZONE PROJECT APPLICATIONS.—

Requirement.

“(1) IN GENERAL.—If required by the President or other Federal law, an eligible entity shall submit to the President an application at such time, in such manner, and containing or accompanied by such information as the President may reasonably require.

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“(2) EVALUATION AND CERTIFICATION.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 120 days after the date on which an eligible entity submits an application under paragraph (1), the President shall evaluate the application to determine whether the resilience or mitigation project that the entity plans to perform within, or that primarily benefits, a community disaster resilience zone—

“(i) is designed to reduce injuries, loss of life, and damage and destruction of property, such as damage to critical services and facilities; and

“(ii) substantially reduces the risk of, or increases resilience to, future damage, hardship, loss, or suffering.

Determination.

“(B) CERTIFICATION.—If the President determines that an application submitted under paragraph (1) meets the criteria described in subparagraph (A), the President shall certify the proposed resilience or mitigation project.

“(C) EFFECT OF CERTIFICATION.—The certification of a proposed resilience or mitigation project under subparagraph (B) shall not be construed to exempt the resilience or mitigation project from the requirements of any other law.

“(3) PROJECTS CAUSING DISPLACEMENT.—With respect to a resilience or mitigation project certified under paragraph (2)(B) that involves the displacement of a resident from any occupied housing unit, the entity performing the resilience or mitigation project shall—

“(A) provide, at the option of the resident, a suitable and habitable housing unit that is, with respect to the housing unit from which the resident is displaced—

“(i) of a comparable size;

“(ii) located in the same local community or a community with reduced hazard risk; and

“(iii) offered under similar costs, conditions, and terms;

“(B) ensure that property acquisitions resulting from the displacement and made in connection with the resilience or mitigation project—

“(i) are deed restricted in perpetuity to preclude future property uses not relating to mitigation or resilience; and

“(ii) are the result of a voluntary decision by the resident; and

“(C) plan for robust public participation in the resilience or mitigation project.”.

(b) NATIONAL RISK INDEX FUNDING.—Nothing in section 206 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, as added by subsection (a) of this section, shall be construed to prohibit the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency from using amounts available to maintain and update the National Risk Index until the earlier of—

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(1) the date on which those amounts are transferred to another source; and

(2) 3 years after the date of enactment of this Act.

(c) APPLICABILITY.—The amendments made by this Act shall only apply with respect to amounts appropriated on or after the date of enactment of this Act.

42 USC 5136
note.

Approved December 20, 2022.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY—S. 3875 (H.R. 7242):

HOUSE REPORTS: No. 117–609 (Comm. on Transportation and Infrastructure) accompanying H.R. 7242.

SENATE REPORTS: No. 117–141 (Comm. on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs).

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, Vol. 168 (2022):

Sept. 28, considered and passed Senate.

Dec. 5, 6, considered and passed House.