

The Investing in Community Resilience Act of 2024

Following a Presidential Disaster Declaration, the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Public Assistance (PA) grant program assists state and local governments in rebuilding damaged infrastructure. Currently, FEMA may cover up to 100%, but no less than 75%, of approved project costs. When the PA grant program provides less than 100% of these costs, states must provide the remaining funds. States can and often do pass some or all of the cost-share responsibility to local governments and nonprofit entities. Communities that are unable to meet the nonfederal cost share may miss out on assistance opportunities, hindering their ability to make necessary repairs and pursue mitigation projects.

The Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 provides the President with the authority to increase the federal cost share for FEMA post-disaster Public Assistance from 75% to 85% for communities that adopt specified readiness and resilience measures before a disaster. Communities that take proactive steps could receive millions in additional post-disaster funding as a result of increased federal cost share, providing a strong incentive for all communities to invest in resilience.

The existing incentive provision, which the *Investing in Community Resilience Act* would add to, gives FEMA broad discretion to determine which resilience measures to incentivize. Examples of current incentivized measures include investing in emergency management programs, adopting disaster-resistant building codes, participating in the National Flood Insurance Program's Community Rating System, funding mitigation projects, and granting tax incentives for projects that reduce risk.

The *Investing in Community Resilience Act of 2024* would amend *Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act* Section 406 by increasing the types of pre-disaster resilience measures that FEMA may incentivize State or Tribal governments to adopt. FEMA may recognize such resilience investments through an increased Federal cost-share from the standard 75% federal cost-share up to 85% for post-disaster public assistance restoration and repair projects and associated expenses.

The new measures include:

- Investments in disaster preparedness, including but not limited to proactively positioning resources, mapping local vulnerabilities to shocks and stressors, and creating emergency plans.
- Participation in programs designated by FEMA that result in substantial science-based and verified increased resilience from building standards or land use practices for storms, tsunamis, floods, wildfires, or equivalent disasters. Such programs include StormReady, FloodReady, TsunamiReady, FireWise, and FORTIFIED.
- Support for Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) programs and equivalent non-governmental organizations by providing or facilitating regular training, outreach, and soliciting participation in preparedness exercises, and other activities.