



Legislative Priorities

119th Congress

Emergency Management Performance Grant and Homeland Security Grant Programs

The successes and accomplishments of the Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG) program are well-documented and measurable, and the program is an invaluable tool for local and state emergency management practitioners. Congress should continue to build emergency management capability and infrastructure at the state, local, and tribal levels by restoring EMPG funding to the FY23 level of \$355 million AND increasing the annual appropriation up to \$455 million for FY26 and beyond. In addition to EMPG, Congress should fully fund the suite of state and local preparedness grants in the Homeland Security Grant Program.

Disaster Management Costs Modernization Act

The Disaster Management Costs Modernization Act would allow grantees to utilize management costs across all open disasters which would ensure the building of recovery and mitigation capacity, incentivize disaster close-out, and drive down the costs of disasters. H.R. 7671 passed the House in December of 2024, but the proposal died when the Senate failed to vote on the companion bill before Congress adjourned. With broad bipartisan and bicameral support, the House and Senate should fast-track the Disaster Management Costs Modernization Act for an early win in the 119th Congress.

Disaster Survivor Fairness Act

The Disaster Survivor Fairness Act, if enacted, would be the first major update of Individual Assistance in years. The legislation includes a series of reforms that will improve disaster assistance programs and survivor outcomes by 1) Creating a universal application for federal disaster assistance and enabling federal agencies to share relevant disaster assistance information with each other; 2) expanding FEMA's ability to fund mitigation and repair projects for disaster-damaged homes; 3) requiring FEMA to develop new post-disaster solutions for renters; 4) supporting efforts to shelter working emergency response personnel immediately following a disaster.

Universal Application

The House and Senate should quickly pass legislation to create a universal application for federal disaster assistance and enabling federal agencies to share relevant disaster assistance information with each other. This common-sense reform would make the process for applying for assistance from FEMA, HUD, SBA, HHS, and other federal agencies significantly easier for disaster survivors and would provide federal agencies the shareable data they need to process claims in a more timely fashion. This idea has broad bipartisan and bicameral support and should be a top priority during the 119th Congress.

Wildfire Response Improvement Act

As wildfires persist and generate more widespread effects, they transform into hazards affecting entire communities and regions. The Wildfire Response Improvement Act directs the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to update its regulations and guidance for the Fire Management Assistance Grant, Public Assistance, and mitigation programs to better respond to the unique challenges of wildfires and improve wildfire mitigation. Congress should approve this bill as part of any wildfire-related disaster supplemental.

PAHPA Reauthorization

The Pandemic All-Hazards Preparedness Act (PAHPA) is the backbone of our nation's health security, providing the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) with authorities for preparing the healthcare and public health systems for public health emergencies, including pandemics and bioterrorist attacks. PAHPA's authorization expired in September 2023 and has been operating under a series of temporary extensions of existing authorities. Reauthorization of PAHPA will give policymakers a unique and transformative opportunity to incorporate lessons learned from COVID into the law so that our public health systems are better prepared for the next public health emergency. Congress should work to complete PAHPA reauthorization by the end of 2025.

National Weather Service

Capacity of the National Weather Service to provide support and cooperation to local emergency managers is critical to the safety of the communities we serve. Sufficient funding for NWS will allow the Service to support the emergency management community and provide decision support services during critical situations. Cuts in funding to the NWS will have a detrimental impact to the support the Service can provide to local emergency managers. IAEM strongly encourages Congress to oppose any budget cuts to the National Weather Service and the other weather-related functions of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

Permanent Reauthorization of FirstNet

Authorization for the First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet) is scheduled to expire in 2027. This sunset creates a very uncertain future for the national public safety broadband network and all the advances made in public safety communications since FirstNet was established in the wake of 9/11. Congress should permanently reauthorize FirstNet to avoid any disruption for first responders who rely on the network for emergency response.

National Flood Insurance Program Reauthorization

Reauthorization of the National Flood Insurance Program is an opportunity for Congress to reduce the complexity of the program and strengthen the NFIP's financial framework so that the program can continue helping individuals and communities take the critical step of securing flood insurance. Current NFIP authorities will expire in March of 2025. Congress should extend NFIP through the end of 2025 and commit to completing work on NFIP reauthorization before another short-term extension is needed.

Training and Education

While significant funding is provided through DHS/FEMA for operation of training programs intended primarily for first responders like fire and law enforcement, FEMA – through its Emergency Management Institute (EMI), Center for Domestic Preparedness CDP), and National Training and Exercise Division (NTED) - is the only federal agency specifically tasked with providing training support to emergency managers. Congress should continue building continuity and maintaining professionalism within the emergency management discipline by supporting funding for EMI, CDP, NTED programs, and other emergency management training-related programs at or above FY25 levels.

