

Housing Survivors of Major Disasters Act of 2019

Section by Section Analysis

Section 1 – Short Title

- This section establishes the short title of the bill.

Section 2 – Definitions

- This section defines the terms for the Federal Emergency Management Agency and its administrator used in the bill.

Section 3 – Eligibility for and Use of Disaster Assistance

- This section clarifies that assistance made available under Section 408 of the *Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Act* (“Stafford Act”), and in connection with a major disaster declared by the president, can be used by individuals or households who occupy an otherwise unused or property, a rented household, a boarding-house, a bunkhouse, a maintenance-of-way car, a mobile home, a manufactured home, a travel trailer, or who are homeless.
- The section also expands the forms of evidence that can be accepted as proof of residence for the purposes of eligibility for disaster assistance beyond simply a deed or title of ownership of a property. Specifically, it allows for the use of a utility bill, merchant’s statement (e.g., credit card bill), pay stub from an employer, driver’s license or State-issued identification card, a mortgage payment booklet or other mortgage documents, property title of mobile home, real estate property tax receipts, school registration containing address of self, child, or children, a will and testament with the name and address of the individual, medical records, charitable donation receipts, or any other documentation, certification, identification or proof of occupancy or ownership not included in this list that can reasonably link individual requesting assistance to damaged property.

Section 4 – Declarative Statement

- This section requires the FEMA administrator to create and distribute a form statement that applicants can use to self-certify for assistance and specifies that these statements are exempt from public notice and comment periods and need not be notarized.
- The section also specifies that applicants for assistance under the Stafford Act during 2017 or 2018 may have 180 days to reopen or appeal a determination on their application for assistance under the new terms created in this bill

Section 5 – FEMA Disaster Housing Assistance Program (“DHAP”) Agreements

- This section requires FEMA to enter into an interagency agreement with the Department of Housing and Urban Development within 60 days after enactment to ensure the implementation of DHAP under the Stafford Act
- The section also requires FEMA and HUD to engage in consultations regarding the implementation of DHAP whenever a major disaster is declared by the president.