

118TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 5350

To make available necessary disaster assistance for families affected by major disasters, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

NOVEMBER 20, 2024

Ms. WARREN (for herself, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. BENNET, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. DURBIN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. HELMY, Mr. KAINE, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. SANDERS, and Mr. VAN HOLLEN) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

A BILL

To make available necessary disaster assistance for families affected by major disasters, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Housing Survivors of
5 Major Disasters Act of 2024”.

6 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

7 In this Act:

8 (1) FEMA.—The term “FEMA” means the
9 Federal Emergency Management Agency.

1 not have documented ownership rights to such prop-
2 erty and is not renting such property; or

3 (2) is or was residing in, or otherwise perma-
4 nently or temporarily occupying, an area for which
5 a major disaster has been declared by the President
6 under section 401 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster
7 Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C.
8 5170), during the designated incident period, includ-
9 ing individuals experiencing homelessness and those
10 residing in any housing accommodation or property
11 upon which a housing accommodation is located, in-
12 cluding any living quarters, boardinghouse, bunk-
13 house, manufactured home, mobile home, or travel
14 trailer.

15 (d) EVIDENCE.—

16 (1) CONSIDERATION.—In the case of an indi-
17 vidual or household that does not have documented
18 ownership rights in the predisaster primary resi-
19 dence of the individual or household, in making a
20 determination to provide assistance pursuant to
21 paragraphs (2) and (3) of section 408(c) of the Rob-
22 ert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency As-
23 sistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5174(c)) for owner-occu-
24 pants, the Administrator shall consider evidence de-
25 monstrative of the individual or household having

1 constructive ownership of the predisaster primary
2 residence.

3 (2) FORMS OF EVIDENCE.—In determining
4 whether an individual or household has constructive
5 ownership for the purpose of paragraph (1), the Ad-
6 ministrator shall consider a wide range of evidence,
7 including the following:

8 (A) A utility (including gas, electric, sewer,
9 or water) bill with the name and address of the
10 individual.

11 (B) A merchant's statement (including a
12 credit card, delivery notice, or first class mail)
13 with the name and address of the individual.

14 (C) A pay stub from an employer with the
15 name and address of the individual.

16 (D) A current driver's license or State-
17 issued identification card of the individual.

18 (E) The deed or title for the applicable
19 property.

20 (F) A mortgage payment booklet or an-
21 other mortgage document.

22 (G) Property title of mobile home certifi-
23 cate of title.

24 (H) A real estate property tax receipt.

1 (I) A school registration containing the ad-
2 dress of self, child, or children.

3 (J) A will and testament with the name
4 and address of the individual.

5 (K) In a State that does not require a will
6 and testament for the transfer of immovable
7 property, a death certificate and birth certifi-
8 cate that establishes an automatic transfer of
9 legal ownership.

10 (L) Medical records that list the name and
11 address of the individual.

12 (M) A charitable donation receipt that lists
13 the name and address of the individual.

14 (N) Any other documentation, certification,
15 identification, or proof of occupancy or owner-
16 ship not included on this list that can reason-
17 ably link the individual requesting assistance to
18 the applicable property.

19 (e) APPLICABILITY.—This section shall apply to
20 funds appropriated on or after the date of enactment of
21 this Act.

22 **SEC. 4. DECLARATIVE STATEMENT.**

23 (a) DEVELOPMENT OF DECLARATIVE STATEMENT.—

24 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 30 days after
25 the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator

1 shall create, in coordination with the appropriate au-
2 thorities of the applicable jurisdiction, and dis-
3 tribute, where necessary, a declarative statement
4 form that an applicant for assistance provided pur-
5 suant to section 3 may use to self-certify such appli-
6 cant's eligibility for assistance pursuant to this Act.

7 (2) PROHIBITION OF NOTARIZATION.—The Ad-
8 ministrator may not require the declarative state-
9 ment form created under paragraph (1) to require
10 notarization by the applicant.

11 (b) EXEMPTIONS.—A declarative statement form cre-
12 ated under subsection (a)(1) shall be exempt from publica-
13 tion notice, public comment periods, and agency informa-
14 tion collection review and approval by the Office of Man-
15 agement and Budget required by the Paperwork Reduc-
16 tion Act (44 U.S.C. 3501 et seq.).

17 (c) GUIDANCE.—Not later than 30 days after the
18 date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall pro-
19 vide written notification and guidance to employees of
20 FEMA regarding the requirements of this Act.

21 (d) PUBLICATION.—Not later than 30 days after the
22 date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall—

23 (1) make the declarative statement form cre-
24 ated under subsection (a)(1) available in Spanish

1 and English at all active Disaster Recovery Centers;
2 and

3 (2) publish in English, Spanish, and any other
4 locally predominant languages on the website of
5 FEMA and on social media the declarative state-
6 ment form and instructions on how applicants can
7 reopen or seek further appeal of relevant determina-
8 tions.

9 (e) PAST DISASTERS.—For applicants of assistance
10 provided pursuant to section 3 since January 1, 2017, the
11 Administrator shall provide an applicant not fewer than
12 180 days to submit the declarative statement form to re-
13 open or appeal a case after such applicant has received
14 notice of the right to do so.

15 **SEC. 5. REPAIR AND REBUILDING.**

16 Section 408 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief
17 and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5174) is
18 amended—

19 (1) in subsection (b)(1)—

20 (A) by striking “rendered uninhabitable”
21 and inserting “damaged by a major disaster”;
22 and

23 (B) by striking “uninhabitable, as a result
24 of damage caused by a major disaster” and in-
25 serting “damaged by a major disaster”; and

1 (2) in subsection (c)—

2 (A) in paragraph (2)(A)(i) by striking “to
3 a safe and sanitary living or functioning condi-
4 tion” and inserting “to ensure that such resi-
5 dences are habitable during longer term recov-
6 ery (including through coordination with other
7 sources for repair and rebuilding of such resi-
8 dences)”; and

9 (B) in paragraph (4) by striking “in cases
10 in which” and all that follows, and inserting “if
11 the President determines such assistance is a
12 cost effective alternative to other housing solu-
13 tions, including the costs associated with tem-
14 porary housing provided under this section.”.

15 **SEC. 6. FEMA HUD AGREEMENTS.**

16 In the case of any major disaster declared by the
17 President under section 401 of the Robert T. Stafford
18 Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C.
19 5170) on or after the date of enactment of this Act, not
20 later than 60 days after the date of the declaration of the
21 major disaster, the Administrator and the Secretary of
22 Housing and Urban Development shall engage in con-
23 sultations regarding the implementation of a disaster
24 housing assistance program or similar joint program
25 under section 408 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Re-

1 lief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5174) to
2 provide temporary rental assistance to individuals and
3 households displaced from their residences by the major
4 disaster, including individuals and households eligible for
5 such assistance under section 3(a) of this Act.

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