
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 2526 Session of
1996

INTRODUCED BY LEVDANSKY, MICOZZIE, KUKOVICH, BAKER, McCALL,
TIGUE, L. I. COHEN, CURRY, LUCYK, CLARK, BELARDI, JOSEPHS,
LAUGHLIN, LYNCH, ROBERTS, CAWLEY, WALKO, READSHAW, TRELLO,
TRAVAGLIO, BEBKO-JONES AND MUNDY, APRIL 1, 1996

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON VETERANS AFFAIRS AND EMERGENCY
PREPAREDNESS, APRIL 1, 1996

AN ACT

1 Creating the Disaster Assistance Relief Fund in the Department
2 of Economic and Community Development; prescribing powers and
3 duties of the Department of Economic and Community
4 Development; and making an appropriation.

5 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
6 hereby enacts as follows:

7 Section 1. Short title.

8 This act shall be known and may be cited as the Disaster
9 Assistance Relief Act of 1996.

10 Section 2. Declaration of policy.

11 The General Assembly finds and declares as follows:

12 (1) In January 1996 severe weather conditions existed
13 across this Commonwealth which caused substantial damage to
14 residences and businesses.

15 (2) The President of the United States declared all 67
16 counties a disaster area due to the severe weather and the
17 ensuing damages.

1 (3) Volunteer fire departments assisted in the cleanup
2 of flooded areas which caused substantial strain on their
3 budgets.

4 (4) Many other volunteer organizations assisted in the
5 cleanup of flooded areas and are also facing some financial
6 difficulties from such assistance.

7 (5) Thus it is in the public interest to provide some
8 remuneration for costs incurred by these volunteer
9 organizations in their efforts to assist in the cleanup of
10 the flooding which occurred as a result of the severe weather
11 conditions in January of 1996.

12 Section 3. Definitions.

13 The following words and phrases when used in this act shall
14 have the meanings given to them in this section unless the
15 context clearly indicates otherwise:

16 "Department." The Department of Economic and Community
17 Development of the Commonwealth.

18 "Disaster." The blizzard or flood which occurred in January
19 1996.

20 "Fund." The Disaster Assistance Relief Fund of 1996 created
21 by this act.

22 "Volunteer organizations." Includes volunteer fire
23 departments and nonprofit community service organizations.

24 Section 4. Disaster Assistance Relief Fund.

25 (a) Establishment.--There is hereby created in the
26 department the Disaster Assistance Relief Fund of 1996. Moneys
27 for this fund shall be appropriated from the General Fund.

28 (b) Use of fund moneys.--The fund shall provide moneys to
29 volunteer organizations which shall reimburse expenses incurred
30 as a direct result of assistance provided in the cleanup of

1 damages caused by the disaster.

2 (c) Termination.--The fund shall be in existence until June
3 30, 1998. Any money remaining in the fund on that date shall be
4 returned to the General Fund.

5 Section 5. Powers and duties of the department.

6 The department shall promulgate rules and regulations to
7 implement the fund created in section 4. The department shall
8 also be responsible for administering the fund created in
9 section 4.

10 Section 6. Grants for reimbursement.

11 (a) Eligible expenses.--To be eligible for a grant the
12 volunteer organization must prove to the satisfaction of the
13 department that an expense incurred by the organization was a
14 direct result of assistance provided for cleanup of the
15 disaster.

16 (b) Application.--The volunteer organization shall complete
17 an application for a reimbursement grant on a form prescribed by
18 the department. The application shall include a separate listing
19 for each expense incurred and a final total of expenses.

20 (c) Determination by department.--Within 90 days of receipt
21 of the application the department shall investigate the request
22 for reimbursement and provide a written determination of whether
23 the expense qualifies for reimbursement. Failure to provide a
24 written determination within the prescribed time frame shall
25 mean that the application qualifies for reimbursement.

26 (d) Disbursement.--After determination of approval by the
27 department, the money shall be delivered to the volunteer
28 organization within 60 days.

29 Section 7. Appropriation.

30 The sum of \$10,000,000, or as much as is necessary to carry

1 out this act, shall be appropriated from the General Fund to the
2 Disaster Assistance Relief Fund of 1996. This appropriation
3 shall not lapse.

4 Section 8. Audit of fund.

5 The Auditor General shall audit the Disaster Assistance
6 Relief Fund of 1996 at the end of its existence and provide a
7 report to the Governor and the General Assembly.

8 Section 9. Effective date.

9 This act shall take effect in 60 days.