

---

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

---

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 179 Session of  
2022

---

INTRODUCED BY OWLETT, CAUSER, ROTHMAN, HAMM, SCHLEGEL CULVER,  
MILLARD, PICKETT, T. DAVIS, BOBACK, SMITH, RYAN, GLEIM,  
ZIMMERMAN AND FARRY, MARCH 8, 2022

---

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON VETERANS AFFAIRS AND EMERGENCY  
PREPAREDNESS, MARCH 8, 2022

---

A RESOLUTION

1 Urging the Congress of the United States to direct the Federal  
2 Emergency Management Agency to update the per capita impact  
3 indicator and project thresholds to provide financial support  
4 for jurisdictions impacted by flooding and other major  
5 disasters, to evaluate cost-sharing adjustments for declared  
6 disasters and to implement language to recognize localized  
7 disasters extend beyond state borders.

8 WHEREAS, Flooding causes more monetary damage in the United  
9 States than any other weather-related event and the average  
10 costs of flood damage can be more than \$2 billion; and

11 WHEREAS, In addition to the economic concerns, flooding can  
12 cause death and the loss of livelihoods depending on the  
13 severity; and

14 WHEREAS, After a flood, major storm or weather disaster  
15 occurs, municipalities can request Federal disaster assistance  
16 funding which should include consideration of cross-  
17 jurisdictional boundaries; and

18 WHEREAS, These disasters and hazardous conditions do not  
19 necessarily adhere to state boundary lines and can often impact

1 multiple areas; and

2 WHEREAS, Before a municipality can receive funding through  
3 the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Public Assistance  
4 Program, the President of the United States must declare a  
5 disaster; and

6 WHEREAS, The FEMA Public Assistance Program is a  
7 reimbursement program that provides Federal funding support to  
8 cover the costs of disaster-related work and repairs; and

9 WHEREAS, Applicants must submit requests for public  
10 assistance within 30 days of the disaster declaration, in  
11 addition to providing documentation for the contracts, equipment  
12 and other information necessary to the application and  
13 corresponding maintenance; and

14 WHEREAS, The Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency  
15 Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 5121-5207 (the Stafford Act) § 401  
16 states in part that: "All requests for a declaration by the  
17 President that a major disaster exists shall be made by the  
18 Governor of the affected State"; and

19 WHEREAS, The Stafford Act declares that the Federal share  
20 "shall be not less than 75 percent," and the cost-share  
21 adjustments are based on regulatory authority and handled  
22 through administrative action; and

23 WHEREAS, Congress should continue to consider legislative  
24 adjustments to the Stafford Act cost-sharing requirements; and

25 WHEREAS, By implementing expansions or exemptions through  
26 waivers, Federal, state and local entities can determine the  
27 responsibilities following a weather-related disaster; and

28 WHEREAS, The Federal Register reviews the decennial  
29 population to determine the amount of damage the state is  
30 expected to independently manage without the need for

1 supplemental Federal assistance; and

2 WHEREAS, Per capita amounts should be updated on an annual  
3 basis to reflect changes in population and overall cost  
4 adjustments; and

5 WHEREAS, When a presidential disaster declaration is needed,  
6 there must be a collaborative approach to handling the  
7 preliminary damage assessment that must occur between the FEMA  
8 regional office, Federal and state partners as well as local  
9 government representatives; and

10 WHEREAS, FEMA reviews several aspects when determining the  
11 estimated costs of assistance for the Federal and non-Federal  
12 per capita dollar amounts; and

13 WHEREAS, The countywide per capita impact indicator and  
14 project thresholds for FEMA Individual Assistance and Public  
15 Assistance for municipalities may be divided by a state line  
16 which causes disparities in resources and support in responding  
17 to the same weather emergency; and

18 WHEREAS, FEMA should amend the estimated cost of the  
19 assistance factor to raise the per capita indicator and the  
20 minimum threshold and the magnitude and severity of the disaster  
21 must be taken into consideration in addition to the obligations  
22 of the Federal, state and local entities; and

23 WHEREAS, In 1999, FEMA established a \$1 million minimum  
24 threshold for damages as the result of a disaster and within the  
25 proposed area for public assistance; and

26 WHEREAS, FEMA adjusts the statewide per capita impact  
27 indicator under the Public Assistance Program to reflect changes  
28 in the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers published by  
29 the Department of Labor; and

30 WHEREAS, All disaster declarations on or after October 1,

1 2021, will have a statewide per capita impact indicator  
2 increased to \$1.63 and current figures are \$4.10 per capita for  
3 the county; and

4 WHEREAS, Although municipalities may meet the criteria for  
5 per capita damage based on the county or the state thresholds,  
6 a municipality's overall eligibility based on current figures  
7 may qualify under one indicator, but not the other; and

8 WHEREAS, In Tioga County, during the spring of 2021, flooding  
9 in the Roseville area caused over \$8 million in damages; and

10 WHEREAS, Based on the current FEMA criteria, Tioga County did  
11 not qualify for assistance; and

12 WHEREAS, Furthermore, in August 2021, there was extensive  
13 flooding caused by a single storm in Northern Tioga County,  
14 Pennsylvania and Southern Steuben County, New York; and

15 WHEREAS, Stueben County qualified for a public assistance  
16 declaration, while Tioga County did not; and

17 WHEREAS, Pennsylvania municipalities should be granted equal  
18 access and opportunity to individual and public assistance to  
19 FEMA funding following a declared disaster; and

20 WHEREAS, By recognizing that hazardous storms and other  
21 natural disasters are not cognizant of geographic borders, FEMA  
22 will permit eligible jurisdictions to apply for the critical  
23 funding to rebuild, repair and sustain infrastructure; therefore  
24 be it

25 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the  
26 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania urge the Congress of the United  
27 States to direct the Federal Emergency Management Agency to  
28 update the per capita impact indicator and project thresholds to  
29 provide financial support for jurisdictions impacted by flooding  
30 and other major disasters, to evaluate cost-sharing adjustments

1 for declared disasters and to implement language to recognize  
2 localized disasters extend beyond state borders; and be it  
3 further

4       RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be transmitted to  
5 the President of the United States, the presiding officers of  
6 each house of Congress, each member of Congress from  
7 Pennsylvania, the Governor of Pennsylvania and to the  
8 Administrator of FEMA.