



COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY

Ranking Member Bennie G. Thompson

H.R. 3626, the “Emergency Management Support Act” As introduced by Rep. Bennie G. Thompson (D-MS)

Cosponsor: Rep. Troy A. Carter, Sr.

A fundamental challenge facing all emergency managers is the frequency and intensity of natural disasters. At the local level, managing more frequent and intense disasters places strain on local emergency management personnel. Such personnel head up the local response to everything from wildfires to hurricanes; they also are responsible for planning for future disasters and executing strategies to mitigate long term risks to communities.¹ Today, local emergency managers face a greater likelihood that “they’ll have to manage the response and recovery from simultaneous disasters.”²

Given the increasingly complex nature of disasters, local emergency managers must be trained and educated on how to handle all hazards. The 2017 Hurricane Season FEMA After-Action Report (AAR) highlighted the need for emergency managers to train for disaster response.³ The report highlighted how “pre-disaster training and exercises proved to be critical in Florida’s ability to efficiently execute mutual aid agreements” after Hurricane Irma.⁴ As the Florida response demonstrates, negative impacts on human populations can be reduced in jurisdictions that have local emergency response professionals who have received pre-disaster emergency management training.

To ensure that local emergency managers are better prepared to support communities before, during, and after disasters, regardless of where they are located in the nation, Congressman Bennie G. Thompson introduced the *Emergency Management Support Act*. This legislation recognizes the importance of strong local emergency managers by amending the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006 to:

- Direct States, through the Emergency Management Performance Grant, to require local emergency management directors to complete emergency management training within one year after the enactment of the bill;
- Require local emergency management directors to complete recurrent training with certifications to be submitted to FEMA annually; and
- Require FEMA to report to Congress on compliance with this Act.

¹ Rob Moore, *2020 is Exposing Emergency Management Gaps*, NRDC, Aug. 24, 2020, <https://www.nrdc.org/bio/rob-moore/2020-exposing-emergency-management-gaps>.

² *Id.*

³ *2017 Hurricane Season FEMA After-Action Report*, FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY, July 12, 2018, https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-08/fema_hurricane-season-after-action-report_2017.pdf#page=20.

⁴ *Id.*