

118TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# S. 5134

To amend the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to expand eligibility for individual and public assistance to certain areas and to include cumulative damage from multiple natural catastrophes in the definition of major disaster, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

SEPTEMBER 23, 2024

Ms. WARREN (for herself and Mr. CRUZ) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

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## A BILL

To amend the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to expand eligibility for individual and public assistance to certain areas and to include cumulative damage from multiple natural catastrophes in the definition of major disaster, 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 “Regional Impact of  
5 Disasters and Emergencies Relief Act” or the “RIDER  
6 Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. CONTIGUOUS AREA.**

2 Section 401 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief  
3 and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170) is  
4 amended—

5 (1) by redesignating subsections (b) and (c) as  
6 subsections (c) and (d), respectively; and

7 (2) by inserting after subsection (a) the fol-  
8 lowing:

9 “(b) CONTIGUOUS AREA.—

10 “(1) IN GENERAL.—Any area under the juris-  
11 diction of a State, local government, or Indian tribal  
12 government, including an area located in a State for  
13 which the President did not declare a major disaster,  
14 that is contiguous to an area that the President des-  
15 ignates as eligible for any form of covered assistance  
16 as a result of a major disaster (in this paragraph re-  
17 ferred to as the ‘eligible area’) may be designated by  
18 the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Man-  
19 agement Agency as being eligible for any form of  
20 covered assistance for which the eligible area is eligi-  
21 ble with respect to such disaster.

22 “(2) DEFINITION.—In this subsection, the term  
23 ‘covered assistance’ means—

24 “(A) hazard mitigation assistance provided  
25 under section 404;

1           “(B) any assistance provided to an indi-  
2           vidual or household under sections 408, 410,  
3           415, 416, or 426; and

4           “(C) any public assistance provided under  
5           sections 403, 406, or 407.”.

6 **SEC. 3. CUMULATIVE DAMAGE.**

7           (a) DEFINITIONS.—Section 102(2) of the Robert T.  
8           Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act  
9           (42 U.S.C. 5122(2)) is amended—

10           (1) by striking “‘Major disaster’ means” and  
11           inserting the following:

12           “(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ‘major dis-  
13           aster’ means”; and

14           (2) by adding at the end the following:

15           “(B) INCLUSION.—The term ‘major dis-  
16           aster’ includes a series of 2 or more natural ca-  
17           strophes, fires, floods, or explosions described  
18           in subparagraph (A)—

19           “(i) with respect to each of which the  
20           Governor of the affected State requested  
21           that the President declare that a major  
22           disaster exists under section 401(a);

23           “(ii) that occurred during a 12-month  
24           period; and

1           “(iii) that individually do not cause  
2           damage of sufficient severity and mag-  
3           nitude to warrant major disaster assistance  
4           under this Act, but that, in the determina-  
5           tion of the President, cumulatively causes  
6           damage of sufficient severity and mag-  
7           nitude to warrant such assistance.”.

8 **SEC. 4. INTERIM GUIDANCE.**

9           Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment  
10          of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Emergency  
11          Management Agency shall issue interim guidance to imple-  
12          ment the amendments made by sections 2 and 3.

13 **SEC. 5. RULEMAKING.**

14          Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment  
15          of this Act, the President, acting through the Adminis-  
16          trator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency,  
17          shall issue such rules and regulations as are necessary  
18          to—

19                (1) ensure compliance with section 1232 of the  
20          FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018 (42 U.S.C. 5170  
21          note); and

22                (2) implement the amendments made by sec-  
23          tions 2 and 3.

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