

The National Emergency Management Association (NEMA) will focus on the following legislative priorities during the 119th Congress (2025-26).

## APPROPRIATIONS

### Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG)



**Background:** With a 50-50 matching requirement, the true investment in this program is more than twice the federal expenditure. In FY23, 60 disasters required a major or emergency declaration through FEMA. Beyond that, 27,229 events required state or local assets, but did not reach the level of a federal declaration. EMPG allows these events to be managed without federal expenditures. When an event does receive a federal declaration, EMPG-funded capabilities may result in a decreased need for FEMA support.

**Request:** Restore the cuts made to EMPG during the FY24 appropriations cycle (to at least \$355 million) and work toward a \$100 million increase for a total of \$455 million.

### Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC)



**Background:** EMAC is the only nationally adopted mutual aid system implemented by the state, DC, and territorial emergency management agencies on behalf of the governors for an efficient, scalable, and unified response. Since 2016, states utilized EMAC in over 313 events and deployed over 60,612 state, local, and National Guard personnel for disaster response and recovery operations, while also supporting over 1,719 exercise and training events. By better enabling the states to help themselves, disaster response can be executed more swiftly and at a lesser cost.

**Request:** Fund EMAC at \$2.5 million annually to allow for modernization, integration, and expansion of state-to-state mutual aid. Current funding level is \$2.25 million.

### Homeland Security Grants



**Background:** The diversity and impact of the threats continue evolving, but the task remains the same —assist the federal government in achieving specific tasks and elevating the level of preparedness nationwide. The State Homeland Security Program (SHSP) and the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) support the building of this foundational federal, state, and local partnership.

**Request:** Restore the cuts made to SHSP and UASI in the FY24 appropriations cycle.

### Training & Exercises



**Background:** Programs such as the Center for Homeland Defense and Security (CHDS), the National Domestic Preparedness Consortium (NDPC), and National Disaster and Emergency Management University (NDEMU) form the bedrock of preparedness efforts. They expand the emergency management field's depth of knowledge and help ensure a pipeline of well-trained emergency management personnel.

**Request:** Cuts made to these programs in the FY24 appropriations cycle should be restored including CHDS (\$18 million), NDPC (at least \$101 million), and EMI (\$32 million).

### FY25 STATUS

The federal government is operating under a Continuing Resolution until September 30, 2025.

## AUTHORIZING

<b>Disaster Management Costs</b>	<p>Allowing states to utilize management costs across all open disasters would ensure the ability to build recovery and mitigation capacity, incentivize disaster close-out, and drive down the costs of disasters. <a href="#">H.R. 744</a>, <i>The Disaster Management Costs Modernization Act</i>, codifies this priority.</p> <p><b>Status:</b> H.R.744 was introduced on 1/28/2025 and was favorably reported by the House Transportation and Infrastructure (T&amp;I) Committee during their markup on 2/26/2025.</p>
<b>Wildfire Assistance</b>	<p>NEMA strongly supports <a href="#">H.R. 1393</a>, <i>The Wildfire Response Improvement Act</i>, which requires FEMA to update guidance related to Public Assistance, Fire Management Assistance Grants, and Benefit Cost Analyses to better reflect the unique needs of wildfires.</p> <p><b>Status:</b> H.R.1393 was introduced on 2/14/2025 and referred to the T&amp;I Committee.</p>
<b>Universal Disaster Application</b>	<p>A universal application would create a process by which information from disaster survivors could be shared across various federal agencies and allow survivors to complete one application for use by FEMA, HUD, SBA, and others. This process could be expanded to include recovery and mitigation programs. Efforts to establish a universal application must include language for data sharing so state emergency managers can maintain visibility into applicants, avoid duplication of benefits, and ensure appropriate use of programs.</p> <p><b>Status:</b> S.861 was introduced on 3/5/2025 and referred to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.</p>
<b>Federal Coordination</b>	<p>As FEMA's mission set continues expanding, the agency struggles to help states and locals navigate the federal bureaucracy. For example, disaster programs at HUD and the Pre-disaster Mitigation and Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) programs at FEMA share common goals but offer drastically different avenues by which to achieve them. To harmonize these programs, Congress should provide FEMA and HUD the authorities to work across the federal interagency and allow grantees to blend projects across programs.</p> <p><b>Status:</b> No pending legislation at this time.</p>
<b>Reauthorize FirstNet</b>	<p>Congress created the First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet) to establish a nationwide public safety broadband network. The network gives public safety both preemption and priority on their own spectrum. FirstNet has been used in numerous events by public safety agencies, including active shooter incidents, wildland fires, and hurricanes. More than 29,500 public safety agencies and organizations are subscribers to FirstNet. Currently, FirstNet is scheduled to be sunset and end operations on February 22, 2027.</p> <p><b>Status:</b> H.R. 3366 failed to pass in the 118th Congress, and a new bill has not yet been introduced in the 119th. NEMA is engaged with Preserve FirstNet, a coalition effort to champion reauthorization.</p>
<b>Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) Reforms</b>	<p>Following a presidentially declared disaster, FEMA's HMGP is a primary source of federal mitigation assistance for state and local governments. There are, however, frequently challenges with spending the obligated HMGP funding in a timely manner and complaints over the consistency of FEMA's policies. Reforms are needed streamline and standardize FEMA award reviews and enhance state and local capacity to manage HMGP grants.</p> <p><b>Status:</b> NEMA developed a legislative proposal and is discussing it with Congressional offices.</p>