

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/emergency declaration through FEMA. Beyond that, 27,229 events required state/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 decreased need for FEMA support.

Request: Support at least the FEMA portion of the FY26 appropriations bill for DHS currently being debated by Congress, which includes \$337 million for EMPG--an increase of \$17 million over FY25. This restores half of the reduction experienced in FY24.

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: Support at least the FEMA portion of the FY26 appropriations bill for DHS currently being debated by Congress, which includes \$3 million for EMAC, representing an increase of \$750,000.

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: Support at least the FEMA portion of the FY26 appropriations bill for DHS currently being debated by Congress, which includes \$494 million for SHSP and \$554 million for UASI. Both increases partially restore the reduction experienced in FY24.

Training & Exercises



Background: Programs such as the Center for Homeland Defense and Security (CHDS), the National Domestic Preparedness Consortium (NDPC), and the Emergency Management Institute (EMI) 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: Support at least the FEMA portion of the FY26 appropriations bill for DHS currently being debated by Congress, which includes \$17.1 million for CHDS, \$96 million for the NDPC, and \$33 million for EMI, all partially restoring the reductions experienced in FY24.

FY26 STATUS

As of 2/23/26, DHS is under a shutdown while Congress continues deliberations on a funding solution for FY26. The above funding priorities represent the most current decision points before Congress.

AUTHORIZING

Disaster Management Costs

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. [H.R. 744](#) and [S. 773](#), the *Disaster Management Costs Modernization Act*, codify this priority.

Status: H.R.744 was introduced on 1/28/25 and favorably reported by the Transportation and Infrastructure (T&I) Committee during their markup on 2/26/25. S. 773 was introduced on 2/27/25 and referred to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs. The bill language was also included as part of the *FEMA Act of 2025*.

FEMA Reform

NEMA supports FEMA's mission and recognizes that reforms are necessary to reduce the complexity of FEMA's disaster programs, incentivize resilience, and improve the disaster survivor experience. Reform legislation should:

- **Provide for a rapid, standardized approval process for FEMA Environmental/Historic Preservation reviews.**
- Empower regional personnel to have the "final call" on interpretations of policy/programs.
- Enhance FEMA's IT systems to limit redundancy and enable interoperability with state and local IT systems.
- **Improve efficiency by making Sec. 428 of the Stafford Act mandatory or otherwise streamline the Public Assistance program.**
- **End de-obligations at the state/local levels except in cases of waste, fraud, or abuse.**
- **Develop a comprehensive suite of incentives that states can pursue to be eligible for an enhanced federal cost share.**
- Utilize existing authorities for pilot programs to develop a block grant program to allow states to manage the Individual Assistance program.
- **Consolidate all existing federal disaster applications for individuals into a single application process to reduce burden on the disaster survivor.**
- **Complete a full audit of all resilience and mitigation incentives to ensure applicability, reasonableness, and alignment with state/local capabilities and gaps.**
- Provide for a streamlined and standardized FEMA HMGP award review process and enhanced state and local capacity to manage HMGP grants.
- Provide FEMA and HUD the authorities to work across the federal interagency and allow grantees to blend disaster recovery and mitigation projects across programs.

Status: Some, though not all, of the above priorities are **partially or fully** addressed by [H.R.4669](#), the *FEMA Act of 2025*, as **indicated** above. H.R.4669 was introduced on 7/23/25 and favorably reported by the T&I Committee on 9/3/25.

Reauthorize FirstNet

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. More than 29,500 public safety agencies and organizations are subscribers to FirstNet. Currently, FirstNet is scheduled to be sunset and end operations on 2/22/27.

Status: H.R.3366 failed to pass in the 118th Congress, and a new bill has not yet been introduced in the 119th, though a House discussion draft was released in late-January 2026. NEMA is engaged with Preserve FirstNet, a coalition effort to champion reauthorization.

Wildfire Assistance

NEMA strongly supports [H.R. 1393](#), *The Wildfire Response Improvement Act*, 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.

Status: H.R.1393 was introduced on 2/14/25 and referred to the T&I Committee.