

112TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2455

To prohibit any requirement of a budgetary offset for emergency disaster assistance during 2011 and 2012.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 7, 2011

Mr. RICHMOND introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Rules, and in addition to the Committee on the Budget, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To prohibit any requirement of a budgetary offset for emergency disaster assistance during 2011 and 2012.

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 “Humanitarian Aid for
5 Americans Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. CONGRESSIONAL FINDINGS.**

7 The Congress finds the following:

8 (1) Presidential emergency declarations trigger
9 aid that protects property, public health, and safety

1 and lessens or averts the threat of an incident be-
2 coming a catastrophic event.

3 (2) The number of disasters has grown on a bi-
4 partisan basis and is a reflection of the weather
5 events of the period: in the 1980s (1980–1989)
6 there were 237 Presidential major disaster declara-
7 tions; in the 1990s (1990–1999) there were 460
8 Presidential major disaster declarations; and in the
9 2000s (2000–2009) there were 561 declared disas-
10 ters, an average of 56 per year during the 2000s.

11 (3) In 2011 alone, there have already been 48
12 major disaster declarations in Texas, Iowa, Indiana,
13 Montana, Vermont, Massachusetts, New York, Alas-
14 ka, Illinois, Minnesota, Oklahoma, Idaho, North Da-
15 kota, South Dakota, Mississippi, Missouri, Ten-
16 nessee, Kentucky, Arkansas, Georgia, Alabama,
17 North Carolina, California, Hawaii, Wisconsin, Or-
18 egon, Washington, New Mexico, Connecticut, New
19 York, Utah, New Jersey, and Maine.

20 (4) Historically, the Congress has recognized
21 the importance of retaining flexibility to provide im-
22 mediate disaster assistance, understanding that lim-
23 iting its flexibility to respond would impede the abil-
24 ity of the Congress to address constituents' needs
25 and limit its ability to fund disaster relief, thus fore-

1 ing State and local governments to face the insur-
2 mountable challenges of rebuilding alone.

3 (5) Despite this history, some members of the
4 112th Congress have called for offsets to any emer-
5 gency aid package.

6 (6) Timely disaster aid allows for a humani-
7 tarian response and a comprehensive recovery, and
8 should not be slowed while the Congress considers
9 additional cuts to infrastructure, homeland security,
10 Medicare, education, and infant nutrition before re-
11 sponding to an unforeseen disaster.

12 (7) For these reasons, this Act allows the Con-
13 gress to be responsive to its constituents, removing
14 any requirement that emergency disaster funding be
15 offset by spending cuts.

16 **SEC. 3. PROHIBITION OF REQUIREMENT OF BUDGETARY**
17 **OFFSETS FOR EMERGENCY DISASTER ASSIST-**
18 **ANCE DURING 2011 AND 2012.**

19 Any appropriation during calendar year 2011 or
20 2012 for disaster assistance pursuant to a declaration by
21 the President of a major disaster or emergency under sec-
22 tion 401 or 501 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief
23 and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170 or 5191)
24 shall not be counted for any budgetary purpose of title
25 III or IV of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2

1 U.S.C. 631 et seq.) or of any rule of the House of Rep-
2 resentatives or the Senate, and shall not be required to
3 be accompanied by any budgetary offset.

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