

**Calendar No. 93**

118TH CONGRESS }  
*1st Session* }

SENATE

{ REPORT  
118-39

DISASTER ASSISTANCE SIMPLIFICATION ACT

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R E P O R T

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND  
GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS  
UNITED STATES SENATE

TO ACCOMPANY

S. 1528

TO STREAMLINE SHARING OF INFORMATION AMONG FEDERAL  
DISASTER ASSISTANCE AGENCIES, TO EXPEDITE THE DELIVERY  
OF LIFE-SAVING ASSISTANCE TO DISASTER SURVIVORS, TO  
SPEED THE RECOVERY OF COMMUNITIES FROM DISASTERS, TO  
PROTECT THE SECURITY AND PRIVACY OF INFORMATION PRO-  
VIDED BY DISASTER SURVIVORS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES



JUNE 13, 2023.—Ordered to be printed

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## DISASTER ASSISTANCE SIMPLIFICATION ACT

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Mr. PETERS, from the Committee on Homeland Security and  
Governmental Affairs, submitted the following

### R E P O R T

[To accompany S. 1528]

[Including cost estimate of the Congressional Budget Office]

The Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, to which was referred the bill (S. 1528) to streamline the sharing of information among Federal disaster assistance agencies, to expedite the delivery of life-saving assistance to disaster survivors, to speed the recovery of communities from disasters, to protect the security and privacy of information provided by disaster survivors, and for other purposes, having considered the same, reports favorably thereon with amendments and recommends that the bill, as amended, do pass.

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#### I. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

S. 1528, the *Disaster Assistance Simplification Act*, amends the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (Stafford Act) to allow the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to share information on disaster survivors with other federal agencies to simplify recovery efforts and reduce the burden on survivors after a disaster. The bill directs FEMA to implement a universal application for disaster victims so that they will no

longer be required to submit multiple applications to different federal agencies for assistance, a process which often requires applicants to answer duplicative questions and creates unnecessary administrative burdens. The bill also requires all information sharing practices to meet applicable data security standards and best practices.<sup>1</sup>

## II. BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR THE LEGISLATION

After a disaster, there are various types of federal assistance that may be made available to disaster survivors.<sup>2</sup> FEMA's Individuals and Households Program can provide financial and/or direct assistance for housing, as well as financial assistance for other needs to eligible individuals and households who have uninsured or under-insured necessary expenses and serious needs resulting from an emergency or major disaster.<sup>3</sup> The Small Business Administration's (SBA) Real Property Disaster Loans and Personal Property Loans are available to eligible homeowners and renters who have incurred uninsured or underinsured damage to their home or personal property located in a declared disaster area.<sup>4</sup> The Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery program may provide additional funding to communities for unmet long-term disaster recovery needs.<sup>5</sup> Finally, the Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Disaster Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program provides temporary food assistance for households affected by a natural disaster.<sup>6</sup>

At present, because of restrictions on information sharing between federal entities, each application for assistance requires a separate and detailed process that can take weeks or even months to complete.<sup>7</sup> The burden of numerous, duplicative applications can overwhelm survivors, causing many to give up on accessing vital assistance. An analysis from SBP, a nonprofit focused on disaster recovery, found that more than 50 percent of the questions asked as part of FEMA's disaster assistance application and SBA's disaster assistance application are duplicative.<sup>8</sup> The burden of navigating multiple protracted applications can be overwhelming to survivors working to rebuild after a disaster, and can sometimes discourage survivors from seeking needed assistance.

Disaster assistance agencies should work together to coordinate a unified, integrated, and agile approach that will provide support to survivors immediately after disasters strike. Current federal pri-

<sup>1</sup> On September 27, 2022, the Committee approved S. 4599, the Disaster Assistance Simplification Act, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute. That bill, as amended, is substantially similar to S. 1528. Accordingly, this committee report is, in many respects, similar to the committee report for S. 4599. *See* S. Rept. 117–163.

<sup>2</sup> Federal Emergency Management Agency, Assistance ([www.fema.gov/assistance](http://www.fema.gov/assistance)) (accessed June 7, 2023).

<sup>3</sup> Federal Emergency Management Agency, Individual Programs ([www.fema.gov/assistance/individual/program](http://www.fema.gov/assistance/individual/program)) (accessed June 7, 2023).

<sup>4</sup> Small Business Administration, Home and Property Disaster Loans ([www.govloans.gov/loans/home-and-property-disaster-loans/](http://www.govloans.gov/loans/home-and-property-disaster-loans/)) (accessed June 7, 2023).

<sup>5</sup> U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery Program ([www.hud.gov/program\\_offices/comm\\_planning/cdbg-dr](http://www.hud.gov/program_offices/comm_planning/cdbg-dr)) (accessed June 7, 2023).

<sup>6</sup> U.S. Department of Agriculture, Disaster Supplemental Nutrition Agency Program ([www.disasterassistance.gov/get-assistance/forms-of-assistance/5769](http://www.disasterassistance.gov/get-assistance/forms-of-assistance/5769)) (accessed June 7, 2023).

<sup>7</sup> Information provided to the committee by FEMA through email on May 19, 2022; SBP, Advocate ([sbpusa.org/our-mission/advocate](http://sbpusa.org/our-mission/advocate)) (accessed May 24, 2023).

<sup>8</sup> SBP, Advocate ([sbpusa.org/our-mission/advocate](http://sbpusa.org/our-mission/advocate)) (accessed May 24, 2023).

vacy and information collection policies and procedures complicate these agencies' ability to coordinate disaster assistance effectively and increase burdens on survivors. This legislation requires that FEMA synthesize separate disaster assistance applications into one universal platform, the online Consolidated Application System, which would reduce administrative burden on agencies and improve equitable recovery for survivors.

### III. LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

Senator Gary Peters (D–MI) introduced S. 1528, the *Disaster Assistance Simplification Act*, on May 10, 2023, with original cosponsors Senators Rand Paul (R–KY) and James Lankford (R–OK). The bill was referred to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

The Committee considered S. 1528 at a business meeting on May 17, 2023. The bill was ordered reported favorably by roll call vote of 12 yeas to 0 nays, with Senators Peters, Hassan, Sinema, Rosen, Padilla, Ossoff, Blumenthal, Paul, Lankford, Romney, Scott, and Hawley voting in the affirmative. Senators Carper, Johnson, and Marshall voted yea by proxy, for the record only.

Consistent with Committee Rule 3(G), the Committee reports the bill with technical amendments by mutual agreement of the Chairman and Ranking Member.

### IV. SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS OF THE BILL, AS REPORTED

#### *Section 1. Short title*

This section establishes the short title of the bill as the “Disaster Assistance Simplification Act.”

#### *Section 2. Findings and purposes*

Subsection (a) identifies the findings of Congress related to the delivery and execution of disaster assistance and response. Subsection (a) also finds that Section 552a of title 5, United States Code (commonly known as the “Privacy Act of 1974”) and subchapter 1 of chapter 35 of title 44, United States Code (commonly known as the “Paperwork Reduction Act”), require burdensome review processes that hinder interagency coordination and disaster assistance efforts.

Subsection (b) states that the purpose of the legislation is to: (1) streamline the sharing of information among federal disaster assistance agencies; (2) modernize the legal safeguards against the unauthorized disclosure or misuse of information about applicants for disaster assistance; and (3) modernize, streamline, and consolidate the overlapping requirements of current law, and the agency policies that implement those authorities, to improve the speed, convenience, efficiency, and effectiveness of disaster relief programs.

#### *Section 3. Establishment of a unified disaster assistance intake process and system*

This section amends the Stafford Act by inserting a new section 707 that establishes a unified disaster assistance intake process and system.

Section 707, subsection (a) defines the terms “Administrator,” “applicant,” “disaster assistance agency,” “disaster assistance information,” “disaster assistance program,” and “record.”

Section 707, subsection (b) requires the FEMA Administrator to establish a unified disaster assistance intake process and system within 360 days of this bill’s enactment. Furthermore, subsection (b) details specific requirements for the capabilities of the consolidated application system, and requires any necessary question updates to the system to be made by FEMA within 30 days of a request from a disaster assistance agency.

Section 707, subsection (c) provides the FEMA Administrator with discretion to collect, maintain, disclose, and use disaster assistance information, including information received from any disaster assistance agency, with other disaster assistance agencies. Subsection (c) also lays out requirements for a notice published pursuant to subsection (d) of Section 707 (as provided in this bill), including a detailed description of the information being collected, why the collection of information is necessary to execute the purpose of a disaster assistance program, and assurance that the information being collected is consistent with fair information practice principles.

Section 707, subsection (d) describes the requirements for a notice to be published related to the unified intake and information sharing system. Additionally, subsection (d) allows the FEMA Administrator to waive certain requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act and delineates the conditions under which the waiver may be exercised by the FEMA Administrator.

Section 707, subsection (e) outlines a set of requirements that the FEMA Administrator must satisfy prior to the collection of disaster assistance information via a unified disaster intake and information sharing system. The FEMA Administrator must (1) certify the unified application complies with data security standards established pursuant to subchapter II of chapter 35 of title 44, United States Code; (2) coordinate with the Secretary of Homeland Security to obtain a privacy impact assessment; and (3) publish standard rules of behavior for disaster assistance agencies and personnel granted access to disaster assistance information, to ensure there are no improper information disclosures.

Section 707, subsection (f) allows the FEMA Administrator to designate another federal agency as a disaster assistance agency after posting terms of the agreement between the FEMA Administrator and the agency on a public website, and also details what must be in the contents of such agreement.

Section 707, subsection (g) requires FEMA, in coordination with the heads of other disaster assistance agencies, to issue reports to Congress on the implementation of this section, including a report by one year after enactment, and a report every year thereafter for two years. It also requires a GAO report no later than three years after enactment on how the implementation of this section has affected disaster survivors and any recommendations for improvements.

Section 707, subsection (h) requires FEMA to brief Congress on the status of implementation, no later than 90 days and again 180 days after enactment.

Section 707, subsection (i) is a rule of construction that provides that the sharing of disaster assistance information among disaster agencies or with state, local, or tribal governments, subject to requirements in current law, will not be construed as a matching program under section 552(a)(8) of title 5, United States Code, and will not be subject to certain subsections of section 552a of title 5, United States Code. Additionally, subsection (i) states that nothing in section 707 can affect an entity's authority to share disaster assistance information in accordance with any other law. It also states that nothing within this section will be construed to require an applicant to apply to more than one disaster assistance program.

#### V. EVALUATION OF REGULATORY IMPACT

Pursuant to the requirements of paragraph 11(b) of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the Committee has considered the regulatory impact of this bill and determined that the bill will have no regulatory impact within the meaning of the rules. The Committee agrees with the Congressional Budget Office's statement that the bill contains no intergovernmental or private sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (UMRA) and would impose no costs on state, local, or tribal governments.

#### VI. CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

<b>S. 1528, Disaster Assistance Simplification Act</b>			
As ordered reported by the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs on May 17, 2023			
By Fiscal Year, Millions of Dollars	2023	2023-2028	2023-2033
Direct Spending (Outlays)	0	0	0
Revenues	0	0	0
Increase or Decrease (-) in the Deficit	0	0	0
Spending Subject to Appropriation (Outlays)	*	36	not estimated
Increases <i>net direct spending</i> in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2034?	No	Statutory pay-as-you-go procedures apply?	No
		<b>Mandate Effects</b>	
Increases <i>on-budget deficits</i> in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2034?	No	Contains intergovernmental mandate?	No
		Contains private-sector mandate?	No
* = between zero and \$500,000.			

S. 1528 would require the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to improve its website, DisasterAssistance.gov, which provides information for individuals, households, and businesses seeking access to federal disaster assistance. Many federal agencies provide information on the portal about the assistance that is available, but the website only allows applicants to apply for one FEMA program and has limited capacity for information sharing among participating agencies.

S. 1528 would require FEMA to streamline the application process by allowing individuals and businesses to apply for all available disaster assistance and to facilitate the sharing of applicant information among participating agencies. Under the bill, the portal would need to meet certain functionality requirements, such as protecting data privacy and facilitating agencies' ability to detect fraud and discrimination in the administration of assistance programs.

In 2022, FEMA allocated about \$11 million for the website, mostly for contracts with private vendors to operate the portal and supporting systems.

Using information from FEMA about the portal's current functionality, CBO expects that the agency would need to contract for additional technology services to develop new user interfaces and information sharing mechanisms and to enhance the website's capacity to manage, store, and secure data. CBO estimates those costs would total \$34 million over the 2023–2028 period, with most of that cost occurring in 2025 and 2026. In addition, we estimate that FEMA would need \$2 million over that period for the equivalent of three fulltime employees—at an average annual cost of \$160,000—over the first three years after enactment, and two employees beginning in 2027, to oversee contractors and coordinate work on the portal among participating agencies. In total, CBO estimates that implementing the bill would cost \$36 million over the 2023–2028 period; any spending would be subject to the availability of appropriated funds.

The costs of the legislation, detailed in Table 1, fall within budget function 450 (community and regional development).

TABLE 1.—ESTIMATED INCREASES IN SPENDING SUBJECT TO APPROPRIATION UNDER S. 1528

	By fiscal year, millions of dollars—						
	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2023–2028
Estimated Authorization .....	*	4	12	13	4	4	37
Estimated Outlays .....	*	4	11	12	5	4	36

\* = between zero and \$500,000.

The CBO staff contact for this estimate is Jon Sperl. The estimate was reviewed by H. Samuel Papenfuss, Deputy Director of Budget Analysis.

PHILLIP L. SWAGEL,  
*Director, Congressional Budget Office.*

## VII. CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW MADE BY THE BILL, AS REPORTED

In compliance with paragraph 12 of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, changes in existing law made by the bill, as reported, are shown as follows (existing law proposed to be omitted is enclosed in brackets, new matter is printed in italic, and existing law in which no change is proposed is shown in roman):



# ROBERT T. STAFFORD DISASTER RELIEF AND EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE ACT

\* \* \* \* \*

## TITLE VII—MISCELLANEOUS

\* \* \* \* \*

### SEC. 707. ESTABLISHMENT OF A UNIFIED DISASTER ASSISTANCE INTAKE PROCESS AND SYSTEM.

(a) *DEFINITIONS.*—*In this section:*

(1) *ADMINISTRATOR.*—*The term “Administrator” means the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency.*

(2) *APPLICANT.*—*The term “applicant” means—*

(A) *an individual, business, or organization that applies for disaster assistance from a disaster assistance program;*

(B) *an individual, business, or organization on behalf of which an individual described in subparagraph (A) applies for disaster assistance from a disaster assistance program; and*

(C) *an individual, business, or organization that seeks assistance as a beneficiary of a State, local government, or Indian tribal government that received assistance under a disaster assistance program.*

(3) *DISASTER ASSISTANCE AGENCY.*—*The term “disaster assistance agency” means—*

(A) *the Federal Emergency Management Agency; and*

(B) *any Federal agency that provides disaster assistance to individuals, businesses, organizations, States, local governments, Indian tribal governments, communities, or organizations that the Administrator certifies as a disaster assistance agency in accordance with subsection (f) to carry out the purposes of a disaster assistance program.*

(4) *DISASTER ASSISTANCE INFORMATION.*—*The term “disaster assistance information” includes any personal, biographical, demographic, geographical, financial, application decision, or other information that a disaster assistance agency, or a recipient of a Federal block grant from a disaster assistance agency, is authorized to collect, maintain, disclose, or use to—*

(A) *process an application for disaster assistance from a disaster assistance program; or*

(B) *otherwise carry out the purpose of a disaster assistance program.*

(5) *DISASTER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.*—*The term “disaster assistance program” means—*

(A) *a program that provides disaster assistance to individuals and households under title IV or V in accordance with sections 408 and 502; or*

(B) *any other assistance program authorized by a Federal statute or funded with Federal appropriations under which a disaster assistance agency awards or distributes disaster assistance to an individual, household, or organization, or provides a Federal block grant for these purposes, that*

arises from a major disaster or emergency declared under section 401 or 501, respectively, including—

- (i) disaster assistance;
- (ii) long-term disaster recovery assistance;
- (iii) the post-disaster restoration of infrastructure and housing;
- (iv) post-disaster economic revitalization;
- (v) a loan authorized under section 7(b) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 636(b)); and
- (vi) food benefit allotments under section 412 of this Act and section 5(h) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2014(h)).

(6) *RECORD.*—The term “record” has the meaning given the term in section 552a of title 5, United States Code.

(b) *UNIFIED DISASTER ASSISTANCE INTAKE PROCESS AND SYSTEM.*—

(1) *IN GENERAL.*—Not later than 360 days after the date of enactment of the Disaster Assistance Simplification Act, the Administrator shall, in consultation with appropriate Federal, state, local, and Indian tribal governments and entities, develop and establish a unified intake process and system for applicants for disaster assistance provided by a disaster assistance agency to—

(A) facilitate a consolidated application for any form of disaster assistance provided by a disaster assistance agency when appropriate to support the nature and purposes of the assistance;

(B) carry out the purposes of disaster assistance programs swiftly, efficiently, equitably, and in accordance with applicable laws and privacy and data protections; and

(C) support the detection, prevention, and investigation of waste, fraud, abuse, or discrimination in the administration of disaster assistance programs.

(2) *CAPABILITIES OF THE CONSOLIDATED APPLICATION SYSTEM.*—The unified intake process and system established under paragraph (1) shall—

(A) accept applications for disaster assistance programs;

(B) allow for applicants to receive status updates on applications for disaster assistance programs;

(C) allow for applicants to update disaster assistance information throughout the recovery journeys of those applicants;

(D) allow for the distribution of information on additional recovery resources to disaster survivors that may be available in a disaster-stricken jurisdiction, in coordination with appropriate Federal, State, local, and Tribal partners;

(E) provide disaster survivors with information and documentation on the applications of those disaster survivors for a disaster assistance program;

(F) allow for the distribution of application data to support faster and more effective distribution of Federal disaster assistance, including block grant assistance, for disaster recovery;

(G) allow for disaster assistance agencies to communicate directly with disaster survivors; and

(H) contain other capabilities determined necessary by the heads of disaster assistance agencies.

(3) *UPDATES.*—Not later than 30 days after the date on which the Administrator receives a request from a disaster assistance agency to update questions in the consolidated application described in paragraph (1) needed to administer the disaster assistance programs of the disaster assistance agency, the Administrator shall make those updates.

(c) *AUTHORITIES OF ADMINISTRATOR.*—The Administrator may—

(1) collect, maintain, disclose, and use disaster assistance information, including such information received from any disaster assistance agency, with any other disaster assistance agency for purposes of subsection (b)(1); and

(2) subject to subsection (d), authorize the collection, maintenance, disclosure, and use of disaster assistance information collected on or after the date of enactment of the Disaster Assistance Simplification Act by publishing a notice on a public website that—

(A) includes a detailed description of—

(i) the specific disaster assistance information authorized to be collected, maintained, disclosed, and used;

(ii) why the collection, maintenance, disclosure, or use of the disaster assistance information is necessary to carry out the purpose of a disaster assistance program;

(iii) how the collection, maintenance, disclosure, and use of disaster assistance information incorporates fair information practices; and

(iv) the disaster assistance agencies that will be granted access to the disaster assistance information to carry out the purpose of any disaster assistance program; and

(B) provides that the submission of an application through a unified disaster application constitutes prior written consent to disclose disaster assistance information to disaster assistance agencies for the purpose of section 552a(b) of title 5, United States Code.

(d) *COLLECTION AND SHARING OF RECORDS AND INFORMATION.*—

(1) *EFFECT OF PUBLICATION OF NOTICE ON PUBLIC WEBSITE.*—The publication of a notice by the Administrator on a public website of a revision to the system of records of the unified intake process and system established under subsection (b)(1) prior to any new collection, maintenance, disclosure, or use of records to carry out the purposes of a disaster assistance program with respect to a major disaster or emergency declared by the President under section 401 or 501, respectively, of this Act shall be deemed to satisfy the notice and publication requirements of section 552a(e)(4) of title 5, United States Code, for the entire period of performance for any assistance provided under a disaster assistance program.

(2) *PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT WAIVER.*—

(A) *IN GENERAL.*—Upon the declaration of a major disaster or emergency pursuant to section 401 or 501, respectively, of this Act, the Administrator may waive the require-

ments of subchapter I of chapter 35 of title 44, United States Code (commonly known as the “Paperwork Reduction Act”), with respect to the voluntary collection of information specific to the declared major disaster or emergency needed to carry out the purposes of a disaster assistance program.

(B) *DURATION.*—A waiver described in subparagraph (A) shall be in effect for the entire period of performance for any assistance provided under a disaster assistance program with respect to a declared major disaster or emergency.

(C) *TRANSPARENCY.*—If the Administrator waives the requirements described in subparagraph (A), the Administrator shall—

(i) promptly post on a public website—

(I) a brief justification for the waiver; and

(II) the agencies and offices to which the waiver shall apply;

(ii) update the information posted under clause (i), as applicable; and

(iii) comply with the requirements of subchapter I of chapter 35 of title 44, United States Code (commonly known as the “Paperwork Reduction Act”) upon the expiration of the period of performance of any assistance provided under a disaster assistance program if the collection of information may be utilized for the purposes of supporting the disaster assistance program in future major disaster or emergency declarations.

(D) *EFFECTIVENESS OF WAIVER.*—Any waiver under subparagraph (A) shall take effect on the date on which the Administrator posts information on the internet website as provided for under subparagraph (C).

(e) *DATA SECURITY.*—The Administrator shall facilitate the collection of disaster assistance information into a unified application only after—

(1) the Administrator certifies that the unified application substantially complies with the data security standards established pursuant to subchapter II of chapter 35 of title 44, United States Code, and any other applicable Federal information security policy;

(2) the Secretary of Homeland Security publishes a privacy impact assessment for the unified application that is similar to the privacy assessment conducted under section 208(b)(1)(B) of the E-Government Act of 2002 (44 U.S.C. 3501 note); and

(3) the Administrator, in consultation with disaster assistance agencies, publishes standard rules of behavior for disaster assistance agencies and personnel granted access to disaster assistance information to protect such information from improper disclosure.

(f) *CERTIFICATION OF DISASTER ASSISTANCE AGENCIES.*—

(1) *IN GENERAL.*—The Administrator may certify a Federal agency as a disaster assistance agency after posting an agreement between the Administrator and the Federal agency on a public website that contains the detailed terms of the agreement.

(2) *CONTENTS OF AGREEMENT.*—An agreement between the Administrator and a Federal agency described in paragraph (1) shall state that the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the Federal agency will—

(A) collect, disclose, maintain, and use disaster assistance information in accordance with—

(i) this section; and

(ii) subject to subsection (i)(2), any existing policies of the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the Federal agency for information protection and use;

(B) train any personnel granted access to disaster assistance information on the rules of behavior established by the Administrator under subsection (e)(3);

(C) in the event of any unauthorized disclosure of disaster assistance information—

(i) not later than 24 hours after discovering the unauthorized disclosure—

(I) in the case of an unauthorized disclosure by the Federal agency, notify the Administrator of the disclosure; and

(II) in the case of an unauthorized disclosure by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, notify disaster assistance agencies of the disclosure;

(ii) cooperate fully with the Administrator and disaster assistance agencies in the investigation and remediation of the disclosure; and

(iii) cooperate fully in the prosecution of a person responsible for the disclosure; and

(D) assume responsibility for any compensation, civil liability, or other remediation measure awarded by a judgment of a court or agreed upon as a compromise of any potential claim by or on behalf of an applicant, including by obtaining credit monitoring and remediation services, for an improper disclosure of disaster assistance information that is—

(i) caused, directly or indirectly, by the acts or omissions of an officer, employee, or contractor of the Federal agency; or

(ii) from any electronic system of records that was created or maintained by the Federal agency pursuant to section 552a(e) of title 5, United States Code.

(g) *REPORTS.*—

(1) *FEMA.*—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this section, and every year thereafter for 2 years, the Administrator, in coordination with the heads of disaster assistance agencies, shall submit to Congress a report on the implementation of this section, including—

(A) how disaster assistance agencies are working together to implement the requirements under this section;

(B) the effect of this section on disaster survivor burden and the speed and efficiency of delivering disaster assistance; and

(C) a description of any other challenges that require further legislative action.

(2) GAO.—Not later than 3 years after the date of enactment of this section, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to Congress a report on how the implementation of this section has affected the disaster survivor experience, and any recommendations for improvements to the requirements under this section.

(h) BRIEFINGS.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this section, and again not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this section, the Administrator shall brief Congress on—

(1) the status of the implementation of the requirements under this section; and

(2) how disaster assistance agencies are working together to implement the requirements under this section.

(i) RULES OF CONSTRUCTION.—

(1) INAPPLICABILITY OF MATCHING PROGRAM PROVISIONS.—The disclosure and use of disaster assistance information subject to the requirements of section 552a of title 5, United States Code, among disaster assistance agencies or with State, local, or Tribal governments carrying out disaster assistance programs shall not—

(A) be construed as a matching program for the purpose of section 552a(a)(8) of title 5, United States Code; or

(B) be subject to subsection (e)(12), (o), (p)(1)(A)(ii), (q), (r), or (u) of section 552a of title 5, United States Code.

(2) AUTHORITIES IN OTHER LAWS.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to affect the authority of an entity to share disaster assistance information regarding programs funded or facilitated by the entity in accordance with any other law or agency policy.

(3) APPLYING TO MULTIPLE PROGRAMS.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to require an applicant to apply to more than 1 disaster assistance program.

\* \* \* \* \*

