



City of Philadelphia

City Council
Chief Clerk's Office
402 City Hall
Philadelphia, PA 19107

RESOLUTION NO. 240992

Introduced October 24, 2024

Councilmember O'Rourke

RESOLUTION

Recognizing the devastating impacts of Hurricanes Helene and Milton, calling on Congress to immediately pass sufficient funding for FEMA's Disaster Relief Fund, and reaffirming the City of Philadelphia's commitment to ensuring that its disaster preparedness measures meet the challenges posed by worsening climate disasters.

WHEREAS, In late September and early October, the United States witnessed two severe hurricanes affecting the southeastern region of the country. The first of these hurricanes, Hurricane Helene, made landfall on September 24th, 2024 and left over 250 people dead, primarily in western North Carolina. The second of these devastating hurricanes, Hurricane Milton, wreaked havoc on northwestern and central Florida, which led to 22 deaths; and

WHEREAS, Both hurricanes took almost unprecedented paths into regions that were almost entirely unprepared for their destruction. As climate change intensifies, these events are becoming commonplace and unprepared regions are facing unprecedented storms more and more frequently; and

WHEREAS, The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) administers necessary federal aid to communities affected by natural disasters, offering solutions such as temporary housing, emergency home repairs, coverage of funeral and medical expenses, and more; and

WHEREAS, Because of the frequency and unique challenges of recent disasters, FEMA has spent nearly half the Disaster Relief Fund's fiscal year budget in just over one week. This is creating national fears that FEMA no longer has adequate funding to respond to future disasters; and

WHEREAS, FEMA has acted as the arm of the federal government for the past forty five years, providing much needed relief to people affected by disasters whether be they man-made, or natural; and

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WHEREAS, In 2024, the United States has suffered more than 20 confirmed weather and climate disaster events, with each generating losses over \$1 billion. Due to climate change, these disasters are becoming stronger and more frequent; and

WHEREAS, The City of Philadelphia has relied deeply on FEMA support when recovering from disasters here at home, including in the wake of Hurricane Sandy in 2012 and the unprecedented flooding of Manayunk and the Schuylkill River caused by Hurricane Ida in 2021. Inevitably, we will be faced with even more serious disasters in the near future; and

WHEREAS, Both disaster preparedness and relief funding work in concert to limit and mitigate the impacts of natural disasters, and they require coordination by federal, state, and local government. As a result, it is critical that we are both well prepared at home and can depend on a robustly funded FEMA to supply necessary disaster relief aid; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That we hereby recognize the devastating impacts of Hurricanes Helene and Milton, call on Congress to immediately pass sufficient funding for FEMA's Disaster Relief Fund, and reaffirm the City of Philadelphia's commitment to ensuring that its disaster preparedness measures meet the challenges posed by worsening climate disasters.