



NASS Resolution on Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Financial Assistance after a Disaster

Adopted February 2006

Reaffirmed February 14, 2011

Revised and Reaffirmed on February 13, 2016

WHEREAS, in October 2012, Hurricane Sandy as a Category 3 hurricane was the deadliest and most destructive hurricane of the 2012 Atlantic hurricane season, and the second-costliest hurricane in United States history, and;

WHEREAS, In September 2005 the gulf south region of America suffered devastating losses as a result of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, with Hurricane Katrina surpassing the total costs of any hurricane to date, and;

WHEREAS, other geographic areas have in the past and will suffer in the future from devastating disasters whether by act of God or man, that will debilitate the election process, such as the postponement of the New York election in Nassau County on September 11, 2001 with 100% of the expenses incurred from canceling and rescheduling the primary election paid by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and;

WHEREAS, the Secretaries of State and other local election officials in the affected areas have born in the past and will bear in the future (LA) substantial additional costs to restore polling places, voting equipment, and other necessary items which will enable them to resume conducting elections when such disasters occur, and;

WHEREAS, we, the members of the National Association of Secretaries of State (NASS) and the chief state election officials in 39 states, agree that accurate, accessible, and accountable elections are the centerpieces of our democracy, and;

WHEREAS, we convened the NASS [Task Force on Emergency Preparedness for Elections](#) to support state election officials in their efforts to effectively establish or enhance sound administrative election practices in preparation for and response to emergency conditions. The Task Force compiled resources on a webpage and released their final report and recommendations in February 2014 "[State Laws and Practices for Emergency Management of Elections](#)" and encourages state and local election officials to utilize this valuable resource.

WHEREAS, the state and local governments in the affected areas have and will suffer tremendous losses of revenue and have to shoulder additional expenses in the cleanup and rehabilitation of their respected areas, and;

WHEREAS, FEMA reports that they have no statutory authority to pay for extraordinary expenses submitted for reimbursement as a result of such disasters, such as rental equipment, travel expense, media outreach, lodging and administrative operations to resume election operations in devastated areas, and force account labor necessary to conduct rescheduled elections, (LA)and;

WHEREAS, FEMA has provided assistance and financial aid for extraordinary expenses to state and local election officials for conducting elections during past disasters, most notably at 100% in the amount of \$1,023,353 to assist Nassau

County with expenses incurred from canceling and rescheduling primary elections on September 11, 2001 as noted in FEMA press release number 1391-169, dated November 8, 2002.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that NASS hereby urges and requests the President and Congress of the United States of America to direct FEMA to deem extraordinary expenditures related to the election process as eligible for payment under the Stafford Act, to reimburse those extraordinary expenditures denied in the past for Hurricanes Katrina, Rita and Sandy, and to work with other federal agencies to expediently take appropriate steps to assist those Secretaries of State and local election officials in the areas affected by disaster in the future.

Adopted the 13th of February, 2016
In Washington, DC

EXPIRES: Winter 2021