



NASS
National Association
of Secretaries of State

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

Revised and Reaffirmed on February 5, 2021

WHEREAS, the year 2020 wrought serious challenges for election officials across the United States as a result of a worldwide pandemic, and;

WHEREAS, compounding the difficulties of the global pandemic, August and October 2020 saw Hurricane Laura, a category 4 storm, and Hurricane Delta, a category 2 storm, displace voters and affect the election infrastructure of Southwest Louisiana, creating physical challenges and financial difficulties with respect to Louisiana's presidential election infrastructure and procedural processes, and;

WHEREAS, in September 2020, Oregon and California suffered tremendous loss with over 20 wildfires that destroyed 2.3 million acres of land, resulting in mass evacuations and displacing thousands of voters in advance of the 2020 election, and;

WHEREAS, in November 2020, just days before the presidential election, Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama were affected by Hurricane Zeta, which impacted polling locations and necessitated an immediate need for portable power stations and fuel to power voting equipment and lighting at hundreds of polling places, and;

WHEREAS, major disasters, both natural and man-made, have affected election infrastructure, procedures, and timing shortly before major elections, including the New York City mayoral primary election on September 11, 2001, the New Orleans Mayoral election soon after Hurricane Katrina in 2005, and the presidential election in the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy in 2012; and

WHEREAS, other areas will, in the future, suffer from devastating disasters that will debilitate the election process creating a financial need and immediate procedural changes; and

WHEREAS, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has provided assistance and financial aid for extraordinary expenses to state and local election officials for conducting elections during previous disasters. (LA)

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, 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.

EXPIRES: Winter 2026