

I voted Yes on H.R. 219, the Sandy Recovery Improvement Act of 2013.

H.R. 219 contains provisions from the FEMA Reauthorization Act which passed the House in 2012 and is aimed at streamlining post-disaster procedures and increasing flexibility for applicants in the wake of a natural disaster. If enacted, this bill would help Hurricane Sandy victims, and communities in future disasters, recover more quickly and cost effectively.

The Sandy Recovery Improvement Act would require the President to establish an expedited environmental and historic review process for rebuilding damaged infrastructure. In addition, the legislation would aid homeowners by authorizing FEMA to make limited repairs to existing homes if the repairs cost less than providing a temporary FEMA trailer, and by establishing a claim dispute pilot program to expedite resolution. This bill would also ease states' ability to undertake mitigation activities by streamlining the environmental review process, providing states with advanced mitigation assistance, and allowing states to administer mitigation grants.

Finally, the legislation would save the government money on debris removal by making permanent a 2006 pilot program that provides greater flexibility to local communities and incentives for projects completed on time and on budget.

The bill was approved by a vote of 403 – 0.