

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 7, 2022

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## International Code Council Applauds U.S. House Passage of the Resilient AMERICA Act

*Legislation would significantly increase FEMA funding for resilient building codes*

**Washington, D.C.** – On Tuesday, April 4, 2022, the U.S. House of Representatives overwhelmingly passed H.R. 5689, the *Resilient Assistance for Mitigation for Environmentally Resilient Infrastructure and Construction by Americans Act*, or *Resilient AMERICA Act*. The legislation, which was introduced late last year by Representatives Peter DeFazio (D-OR), Sam Graves (R-MO), Dina Titus (D-NV), and Daniel Webster (R-FL), first passed out of the House’s Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure in October. The Code Council, which has supported this legislation since its introduction, recently joined over 25 emergency management, non-profit, and industry members in a [letter](#) to House leadership urging its swift consideration and passage last month.

The Resilient AMERICA Act more than doubles the allowable funding calculation under the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s (FEMA) [Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities \(BRIC\) program](#) from the current 6% to 15%, which allows for additional projects and activities to be funded. With these additional resources, the legislation also recognizes the significant return on investment provided to communities by adopting, implementing, and enforcing up-to-date hazard-resistant, consensus-based codes and standards. *Resilient AMERICA* requires that each annual BRIC grant cycle invests at least ten percent in code-focused grant awards.

The Resilient AMERICA Act follows the passing of the *Disaster Recovery and Reform Act* (DRRA) in 2018 which, for the first time ever, provided a dedicated stream of annual funding for FEMA’s pre-disaster mitigation efforts and permitted these resources to assist state, local, tribal, and territorial (SLTT) governments in adopting and implementing hazard-resistant building codes. After running two BRIC grant cycles, the pent-up demand at SLTT levels of government for federal assistance for disaster mitigation was apparent, creating an urgent need for the additional resources provided through the Resilient AMERICA Act.

The [National Institute of Building Sciences reports](#) adopting current building codes saves \$11 for every \$1 invested. FEMA’s [Building Codes Save](#) report found that if all future construction

adhered to current codes, the U.S. would avoid more than \$600 billion in cumulative direct losses from floods, hurricanes, and earthquakes over the next four decades. Despite these benefits, about two-thirds of communities facing hazard risk have not adopted modern, hazard-resistant codes and standards. In recent years, 30% of new construction has taken place in communities with either no codes or codes that have not been updated this century.

"The adoption and effective implementation of hazard-resistant codes are the most effective means to mitigate against disaster risk. We commend the U.S. House of Representatives for working to advance the Resilient AMERICA Act, which more than doubles funding for FEMA's BRIC program and establishes a dedicated stream of resources for communities to improve their codes. This will help build more resilient communities," said Code Council Chief Executive Officer Dominic Sims, CBO.

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### **About the International Code Council**

The [International Code Council](#) is the leading global source of model codes and standards and building safety solutions. Code Council codes, standards and solutions are used to ensure safe, affordable and sustainable communities and buildings worldwide.