



ICC NEWS RELEASE

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U.S. House of Representatives passes bill requiring disaster recovery funds adhere to latest codes

Funding also provided to train code officials and the construction industry in the latest codes

Washington, D.C. – Today the U.S. House of Representatives passed the Reforming Disaster Recovery Act (H.R. 3702), requiring that new construction and rehabilitation funded through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s Community Development Block Grant disaster recovery program (CDBG-DR) adhere to the latest building codes. The International Code Council worked closely with House leadership on the bill.

The CDBG-DR program provides flexible funding to states and local governments to address unmet recovery needs related to housing, infrastructure and economic revitalization, focusing assistance toward low- and moderate-income communities. CDBG-DR is the largest post-disaster recovery program not operated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Congress provided \$35.4 billion for the program in response to the damage caused by Hurricanes Maria, Irma and Harvey.

Studies consistently show that adopting and applying up to date codes is one of the most effective mitigation measures a community can undertake. A [recent study](#) by the congressionally-established National Institute of Building Science found that using the latest model building codes provides a benefit of \$11 for every \$1 invested through earthquake, flood and wind mitigation benefits, with a \$4 to \$1 wildfire mitigation benefit.

Despite the demonstrated benefits of using up to date codes, their adoption is not consistent across the country. [According to FEMA](#), two-thirds of communities facing hazard risk have not adopted hazard resistant codes. This means that the safety and resilience requirements for federally supported reconstruction investments currently varies considerably. The Reforming Disaster Recovery Act addresses this challenge by establishing minimum standards for post-disaster rebuilding, ensuring all communities and their residents are provided with the same protections regardless of where they are located. The bill couples the code requirement with additional funding to train building officials, fire officials and the construction industry on the latest building codes.

“Tying infrastructure investments to code requirements is one of the best ways to protect people and mitigate damage from future disasters,” said Code Council Chief Executive Dominic Sims, CBO. “The Reforming Disaster Recovery Act ensures one of the United States’ largest recovery programs promotes safe, cost-effective and resilient construction.”

Requiring minimum building standards for federal infrastructure investments is an ongoing priority of the Code Council, its members and partners. For more information about the importance of updated building codes, see these resources:

- Codes Save website: www.iccsafe.org/codes-save
- [National Mitigation Investment Strategy](#)
- A [letter](#) to Congressional leadership signed by 40 state and local emergency response, manufacturing, contractor, insurance, energy efficiency, engineering, design and resilience organizations
- A [resolution](#) by the Congressional Fire Services Institute
- An [op-ed](#) by bipartisan former FEMA Administrators and the Code Council

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About the International Code Council

The [International Code Council](#) is a nonprofit association that provides a wide range of building safety solutions including product evaluation, accreditation, certification, codification and training. It develops model codes and standards used worldwide to construct safe, sustainable, affordable and resilient structures.