AMENDMENT TO H.R. 4
OFFERED BY MR. ESPAILLAT OF NEW YORK

Page 306, after line 23, insert the following (and re-designate succeeding sections and make conforming amendments as necessary):

SEC. 626. HOUSING VICTIMS OF MAJOR DISASTERS.

(a) ELIGIBILITY FOR AND USE OF DISASTER HOUSING ASSISTANCE.—

(1) ELIGIBILITY.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a family described in paragraphs (3) and (4) shall be eligible for housing assistance made available under section 408 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5174) in connection with a major disaster declared pursuant to such Act, including Hurricane Maria of 2017.

(2) USE.—In the case of any housing assistance described in paragraph (1) that is made available in connection with a major disaster declared pursuant to such Act, including Hurricane Maria of 2017, such assistance may be used on behalf of families described in paragraph (3) for costs relating to obtaining title for such families to properties described
in paragraph (3)(A), which shall include costs of
land surveys and any other taxes or fees associated
with transfer of the property.

(3) ELIGIBILITY.—With respect to a major dis-
aster, a family described in this paragraph is a fam-
ily who—

(A) is occupying an otherwise unused or
uninhabited property located in the area for
which the major disaster was declared but who
does not have documented ownership rights to,
and is not renting the property; or

(B) is renting a property located in the
area for which the major disaster was declared
but does not have a written lease for such rent-
al.

In making a determination of whether occupancy or
a rental tenancy exists for purposes of subparagraph
(A) or (B), the Administrator of the Federal Emer-
gency Management Agency (referred to in this Act
as FEMA) shall consider a wide range of evidence
that demonstrates the existence of such occupancy
or tenancy set forth in paragraph (4).

(4) ALTERNATIVE FORMS OF PROOF.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—In determining if an in-
dividual or family is eligible for housing assist-
ance under paragraph (3), the Administrator shall consider a sworn and notarized affidavit written by a licensed attorney that affirms such occupancy or tenancy by the individual who owns, possesses, and maintains the house or land and the presentation of 1 of the following documents to affirm proof of ownership of the individual named in the affidavit:

(i) A utility (gas, electric, or water) bill with the name and address of the individual.

(ii) A merchant’s statement (credit card, delivery notice, or first class mail) with the name and address of the individual.

(iii) A pay stub from an employer with the name and address of the individual.

(iv) A current driver’s license or State-issued identification card of the individual.

(v) The deed or title for the home or land.

(vi) Mortgage payment booklet or other mortgage documents.
(vii) Property title of mobile home certificate of title.

(viii) Real estate property tax receipts.

(ix) School registration for self, child, or children.

(x) Will and testament with the name and address.

(xi) Medical records that list the name and address of the individual.

(xii) Charitable donation receipts that list the name and address of the individual.

(xiii) Government assistance documents.

(xiv) Any other documentation, certification, identification, or proof of occupancy or ownership not included on this list, that can reasonably link the person requesting assistance to the damaged property.

(xv) If records are unavailable due to damage from the disaster or any other circumstance that impedes an individual from providing proof of ownership, the Administrator shall request verification from the State or Federal agency with the written
permission of the individual or legally authorized representative of such individual.

(B) ADDITIONAL REVIEW.—The Administrator shall review again, any previous FEMA application submitted for housing assistance that was denied in 2017 or 2018.

(C) NOTIFICATION OF EMPLOYEES.—Not later than 7 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall provide written notification and guidance to FEMA employees regarding the requirements set forth in this section.

(b) FEMA DHAP AGREEMENTS.—

(1) 2017 DISASTERS.—Not later than 15 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency shall enter into an interagency agreement or agreements with the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development as may be necessary to ensure the implementation of a Disaster Housing Assistance Program to provide temporary rental assistance to families displaced from their residences by any major disaster declared during 2017 pursuant to the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, including Hurricane Maria of 2017,
including families eligible for such assistance under subsection (a)(1) of this section.

(2) FUTURE DISASTERS.—In the case of any major disaster declared pursuant to the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.) after the date of the enactment of this Act, not later than 60 days after such declaration the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development shall engage in consultations regarding the implementation of a Disaster Housing Assistance Program to provide temporary rental assistance to families displaced from their residences by the disaster, including families eligible for such assistance under subsection (a)(1) of this section.