

**AMENDMENT TO RULES COMMITTEE PRINT 117-**

**54**

**OFFERED BY MR. KATKO OF NEW YORK**

At the end of title LIII of division E of the bill, add the following:

1 **SEC. 5306. PRELIMINARY DAMAGE ASSESSMENT.**

2 (a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

3 (1) Preliminary damage assessments play a  
4 critical role in assessing and validating the impact  
5 and magnitude of a disaster.

6 (2) Through the preliminary damage assess-  
7 ment process, representatives from the Federal  
8 Emergency Management Agency validate informa-  
9 tion gathered by State and local officials that serves  
10 as the basis for disaster assistance requests.

11 (3) Various factors can impact the duration of  
12 a preliminary damage assessment and the cor-  
13 responding submission of a major disaster request,  
14 however, the average time between when a disaster  
15 occurs, and the submission of a corresponding dis-  
16 aster request has been found to be approximately  
17 twenty days longer for flooding disasters.

1           (4) With communities across the country facing  
2 increased instances of catastrophic flooding and  
3 other extreme weather events, accurate and efficient  
4 preliminary damage assessments have become criti-  
5 cally important to the relief process for impacted  
6 States and municipalities.

7           (b) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—

8           (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after  
9 the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator  
10 of the Federal Emergency Management Agency shall  
11 submit to Congress a report describing the prelimi-  
12 nary damage assessment process, as supported by  
13 the Federal Emergency Management Agency in the  
14 5 years before the date of enactment of this Act.

15           (2) CONTENTS.—The report described in para-  
16 graph (1) shall contain the following:

17           (A) The process of the Federal Emergency  
18 Management Agency for deploying personnel to  
19 support preliminary damage assessments.

20           (B) The number of Agency staff partici-  
21 pating on disaster assessment teams.

22           (C) The training and experience of such  
23 staff described in subparagraph (B).

24           (D) A calculation of the average amount of  
25 time disaster assessment teams described in

1           subparagraph (A) are deployed to a disaster  
2           area.

3           (E) The efforts of the Agency to maintain  
4           a consistent liaison between the Agency and  
5           State, local, tribal, and territorial officials with-  
6           in a disaster area.

7           (c) PRELIMINARY DAMAGE ASSESSMENT.—

8           (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 6 months  
9           after the date of enactment of this Act, the Adminis-  
10          trator of the Federal Emergency Management Agen-  
11          cy shall convene an advisory panel consisting of  
12          emergency management personnel employed by  
13          State, local, territorial, or tribal authorities, and the  
14          representative organizations of such personnel to as-  
15          sist the Agency in improving critical components of  
16          the preliminary damage assessment process.

17          (2) MEMBERSHIP.—

18          (A) IN GENERAL.—This advisory panel  
19          shall consist of at least 2 representatives from  
20          national emergency management organizations  
21          and at least 1 representative from each of the  
22          10 regions of the Federal Emergency Manage-  
23          ment Agency, selected from emergency manage-  
24          ment personnel employed by State, local, terri-  
25          torial, or tribal authorities within each region.

1 (B) INCLUSION ON PANEL.—To the fur-  
2 thest extent practicable, representation on the  
3 advisory panel shall include emergency manage-  
4 ment personnel from both rural and urban ju-  
5 risdictions.

6 (3) CONSIDERATIONS.—The advisory panel con-  
7 vened under paragraph (1) shall—

8 (A) consider—

9 (i) establishing a training regime to  
10 ensure preliminary damage assessments  
11 are conducted and reviewed under con-  
12 sistent guidelines;

13 (ii) utilizing a common technological  
14 platform to integrate data collected by  
15 State and local governments with data col-  
16 lected by the Agency; and

17 (iii) assessing instruction materials  
18 provided by the Agency for omissions of  
19 pertinent information or language that  
20 conflicts with other statutory requirements;  
21 and

22 (B) identify opportunities for streamlining  
23 the consideration of preliminary damage assess-  
24 ments by the Agency, including eliminating du-  
25 plicative paperwork requirements and ensuring

1           consistent communication and decision making  
2           among Agency staff.

3           (4) INTERIM REPORT.—Not later than 18  
4           months after the date of enactment of this Act, the  
5           Administrator shall submit to Congress a report re-  
6           garding the findings of the advisory panel, steps that  
7           will be undertaken by the Agency to implement the  
8           findings of the advisory panel, and additional legisla-  
9           tion that may be necessary to implement the find-  
10          ings of the advisory panel.

11          (5) RULEMAKING AND FINAL REPORT.—Not  
12          later than 2 years after the date of enactment of  
13          this Act, the Administrator shall issue such regula-  
14          tions as are necessary to implement the rec-  
15          ommendations of the advisory panel and submit to  
16          Congress a report discussing—

17                 (A) the implementation of recommenda-  
18                 tions from the advisory panel;

19                 (B) the identification of any additional  
20                 challenges to the preliminary damage assess-  
21                 ment process, including whether specific disas-  
22                 ters result in longer preliminary damage assess-  
23                 ments; and

1 (C) any additional legislative recommenda-  
2 tions necessary to improve the preliminary dam-  
3 age assessment process.

