



Legislation Text

File #: Res 1655-2013, **Version:** *

Res. No. 1655

Resolution calling upon the United States Congress to introduce and pass legislation that would amend the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to allow aid to be given to houses of worship affected by Hurricane Sandy.

By Council Members Vallone, Recchia, The Speaker (Council Member Quinn), Cabrera, Fidler, Comrie, Greenfield, Reyna, Ferreras, Koppell, Vann, Chin, Crowley, Dickens, Gentile, James, Koo, Nelson, Rose, Van Bramer, Williams, Wills, Vacca, Halloran, Oddo and Ulrich

Whereas, On the evening of Monday, October 29, 2012, Hurricane Sandy brought a catastrophic and unprecedented storm surge of epic proportions to New York City, causing massive flooding and extensive property and infrastructure damage throughout the City; and

Whereas, On October 30, 2012, in the wake of Hurricane Sandy, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency ("FEMA") announced that federal disaster aid has been made available to the State of New York and ordered federal aid to supplement state and local recovery efforts in the area affected by Hurricane Sandy beginning on October 27, 2012, and continuing; and

Whereas, Under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act ("Stafford Act"), the Federal government, through FEMA, reimburses states and municipalities for funding assistance in recovery from a major disaster; and

Whereas, This action made federal funding available to affected individuals, and eligible local governments and certain private not-for-profit organizations in New York City and other areas; and

Whereas, In the days following Hurricane Sandy, many not-for-profit organizations, including many houses of worship, from all over New York City immediately sprang into action to coordinate relief efforts, and provide essential services to impacted communities, despite the tremendous property damage sustained by their

own organizations; and

Whereas, While many not-for profit organizations are able to receive FEMA financial assistance for damage sustained by Hurricane Sandy, FEMA financial assistance is not offered to houses of worship; and

Whereas, According to FEMA regulations, pursuant to the Stafford Act, in order for a no-for-profit to qualify for federal disaster assistance it must provide services that are for the public good, hence, a broad range of private nonprofit organizations qualify for federal disaster assistance grants, including zoos, museums, performing arts centers and libraries; and

Whereas, The strength of the faith-based community and the houses of worship they represent is critical to New York City's recovery from Hurricane Sandy; and

Whereas, The Stafford Act should be amended to allow aid to be given to houses of worship affected by Hurricane Sandy; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the United States Congress to introduce and pass legislation that would amend the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to allow aid to be given to houses of worship affected by Hurricane Sandy.

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