

**AMERICAN PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION ASSOCIATION  
FACT SHEET  
FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION  
PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION EMERGENCY RELIEF PROGRAM  
*October 17, 2024***

## Summary

Over the past decade, natural disasters, including floods, hurricanes, wildfires, and earthquakes, have directly impacted many public transit agencies. Transit agencies have provided emergency transportation services and sustained significant damage to capital assets.

The Public Transportation Emergency Relief program enables the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to provide financial assistance to public transit agencies and other recipients in the aftermath of a declared emergency or major disaster.<sup>1</sup>

Since 2012, Congress has **provided \$11.4 billion to 17 States, Washington, DC, and 3 Territories<sup>2</sup>** to help public transit agencies respond to and recover from natural disasters. Congress has appropriated emergency funds to the FTA Public Transportation Emergency Relief program in four separate Acts of Congress:

- **\$10.9 billion** for Hurricane Sandy (Disaster Relief Appropriations Act);
- **\$330 million** for Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria (Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018);
- **\$10.5 million** for the Alaska Earthquake, Hurricane Michael and other 2018 natural disasters (Additional Supplemental Appropriations for Disaster Relief Act of 2019); and
- **\$213.9 million** for declared major disasters occurring in calendar years 2017, 2020, 2021, and 2022 (Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023).

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<sup>1</sup> See 49 U.S.C. § 5324.

<sup>2</sup> Alaska, California, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Missouri, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Texas, Washington, D.C., the Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

## Background

The Public Transportation Emergency Relief program,<sup>3</sup> established under the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Act (MAP-21),<sup>4</sup> enables FTA to provide financial assistance to public transit agencies and other recipients to respond to and recover from a declared emergency or major disaster.<sup>5</sup>

Since 2012, Congress has **provided \$11.4 billion to 17 States, Washington, DC, and 3 Territories**<sup>6</sup> to help public transit agencies respond to and recover from natural disasters. Congress has appropriated emergency funds to the FTA Public Transportation Emergency Relief program in four separate Acts of Congress:

- **\$10.9 billion** for Hurricane Sandy (Disaster Relief Appropriations Act);
- **\$330 million** for Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria (Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018);
- **\$10.5 million** for the Alaska Earthquake, Hurricane Michael and other 2018 natural disasters (Additional Supplemental Appropriations for Disaster Relief Act of 2019); and
- **\$213.9 million** for declared major disasters occurring in calendar years 2017 and 2020-2022 (Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023).

### Disaster Relief Appropriations Act

Under the Disaster Relief Appropriations Act,<sup>7</sup> Congress provided **\$10.9 billion**<sup>8</sup> for FTA's Public Transportation Emergency Relief program for recovery, relief, and resilience efforts in areas affected by Hurricane Sandy. Approximately \$10.2 billion remained available after implementation of the Budget Control Act of 2011<sup>9</sup> and after intergovernmental transfers to other bureaus and offices within the U.S. Department of Transportation, FTA allocated approximately \$10.1 billion to public transit agencies in multiple tiers to affected areas.

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<sup>3</sup> 49 U.S.C. § 5324.

<sup>4</sup> Pub. L. No. 112-141 (2012).

<sup>5</sup> See FTA, Emergency Relief Manual, Reference Manual for States and Transit Agencies on Response and Recovery from Declared Disasters and FTA's Emergency Relief Program (49 U.S.C 5324) Version 2.0 (March 2023).

<sup>6</sup> Alaska, California, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Missouri, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Texas, Washington, D.C., the Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

<sup>7</sup> Pub. L. No. 113-2 (2013).

<sup>8</sup> FTA is reserving \$50 million for latent damages, damages not assessed in smaller areas, cost increases, and additional Emergency Relief needs that exceed the amounts made available in this notice. FTA may update allocations without further notice based on revised validated damage assessments. 83 Fed. Reg. 25104 (May 31, 2018).

<sup>9</sup> Pub. L. No. 112-25 (2011).

Public transit agencies in seven States and Washington, DC received emergency funding to respond to and recover from Hurricane Sandy: Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Washington, DC. View [FTA's allocations](#) pursuant to the Act.<sup>10</sup>

### **Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018**

Under the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018,<sup>11</sup> Congress provided **\$330 million** for FTA's Emergency Relief Program for recovery, relief, and resilience efforts in areas affected by Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria.

Public transit agencies in five States and two Territories received emergency relief funding to respond to and recover from Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria: Florida, Georgia, Texas, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. View FTA's [first](#) and [second](#) allocations pursuant to the Act.

### **Additional Supplemental Appropriations for Disaster Relief Act of 2019**

Under the Additional Supplemental Appropriations for Disaster Relief Act, 2019,<sup>12</sup> Congress provided **\$10.5 million**<sup>13</sup> for FTA's Emergency Relief Program for recovery, relief, and resilience efforts in areas affected by the Alaska Earthquake, Hurricane Michael, and other natural disasters that occurred in 2018.

Public transit agencies in four States and one Territory received emergency relief funding to respond to and recover from 2018 natural disasters: Alaska, Florida, North Carolina, South Carolina, and the Northern Mariana Islands. View [FTA's allocations](#) pursuant to the Act.

### **Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023**

Under the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023,<sup>14</sup> Congress provided **\$213.9 million** for FTA's Emergency Relief Program for response, recovery, and rebuilding activities for declared major disasters in 2017, 2020, 2021, and 2022.

Public transit agencies in eight States and one Territory received emergency relief funding to respond to and recover from 2017, 2020, 2021, and 2022 natural disasters, including Hurricanes Ian, Ida, Maria, and Zeta, and damaging storms and flooding in summer 2022, and the winter storm of 2021: California, Florida, Kentucky, Louisiana, Missouri, New York, Texas, and Puerto Rico. View FTA's [first](#) and [second](#) allocations pursuant to the Act.

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<sup>10</sup> Recovery funds from NY-44-X004 in the total amount of \$2,125,000 are reserved for future Hurricane Sandy projects. See FTA, [Funding Allocations for Hurricane Sandy Recovery and Resiliency](#) (December 2023).

<sup>11</sup> Pub. L. No. 115-123 (2018).

<sup>12</sup> Pub. L. No. 116-20 (2019).

<sup>13</sup> The Additional Supplemental Appropriations for Disaster Relief Act of 2019 (Disaster Relief Act) (Pub. L. 116-20) appropriated \$10,542,000 (\$10,462,935 available after 0.75% administrative takedown).

<sup>14</sup> Pub. L. No. 117-328 (2022).