

The 2017-2018 Hurricane Season

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Destruction During the 2017-2018 Hurricane Season

The 2017-2018 Hurricane season produced weather conditions that inflicted severe damage to people across the United States and its territories. Hurricane Maria was marked as a Category 5 storm and formed just a month after Hurricane Harvey battered regions such as Texas. Brutal weather conditions and poor leadership in regions like Puerto Rico resulted in criticism across the nation. It took the people along the Gulf Coast of America to work together so they could save lives. Government response to catastrophic events has proven time and time again to be slow towards supplying relief. If areas across the nation can receive funds to manage disasters then they can be awarded the resources they need to react, then fix a problem at its source. (National Hurricane Center, 2018)

Limits of Government Emergency Management

A common occurrence from each form of disaster, be it natural or man-made, has shown that government emergency management is minimal in its effectiveness. People affected by such occurrences are not receiving the assistance they require after an event inflicts itself upon individuals within the zone of impact. In some cases, the problem can be attributed to a lack of food, water, shelter, or evacuation efforts made when it is needed. At times supplies, and efforts to save people may be given, however the speed it takes for these necessary actions to be made will determine how well an emergency response attempt will unfold. Every variable for dealing with emergency situations is reliant on a complete emergency management plan.

FEMA Performance and Disaster-Aid Failures

Many problems that are applied to disasters such as Hurricane Maria or [Hurricane Katrina](#), can be blamed on a lack of emergency management. The lack of disaster aid and the majority of casualties all stem from the Federal government, which includes FEMA as a primary party in dealing with these disasters. Our government believes itself to be an independent figure in “helping its people.” Many local and state governments, provided with appropriate resources, could use their power to create a whole emergency relief plan. Despite this chance, the Federal government continues to fund its own programs, such as the Department of Homeland Security, to make sub-par results where it is needed most. Without a proper supply to establish a successful management plan, states leave most aid to

FEMA and the Department of Homeland Security. (U.S. Government Accountability Office, 2018)

Federal Programs Insurance and Resource Waste

Many Federal programs that deal with the aftermath of disasters contribute to a waste of money and resources. “National Flood Insurance Program” is a primary form of insurance used by many people across America. With this form of insurance, many people take advantage of its provided coverage. With the National Flood Insurance Program, many people purposefully live in locations or establish businesses where they can receive these benefits become more costly following a disaster. “29 states send their tax money to FEMA only to end up footing the disaster-response bill for the other 21. Unfair? Incredibly so — and inefficient,” stated Matt Mayer, a heritage Homeland Security expert. Instead of taking money from every state to deal with a disaster affected by one or two events, send enough money so the states may handle their own situations in an effective, fast way. Estimates made that State and Local governments will use \$220 billion of their own source of revenue to administer a rough amount of \$460 billion of Federal grants of aid. The same funding issues can be applied to the security of our borders and to combat terrorism across America. If states managed their own policies to fight against disasters, then it would be certain that money would not be a national issue for excessive spending. Should there be a combined total of money pushed for dealing with emergency events? Is there another way to manage these large-scale disasters? Yes, with a shift in funding many of these problems will solve themselves.

Stafford Act Disaster Assistance

The “Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act of 1988” is another form of legislation that authorizes Federal government payouts of at least 75 percent of all money towards disaster relief. With an official declaration, FEMA can have this Stafford Act to assist in any situation. Terms of this legislation force the Federal government to;

Federal Cost-Sharing Responsibilities

“pay 100 percent of costs to save lives, prevent human suffering, or mitigate substantial damage; the Federal Government must pay no less than 75 percent of eligible assistance to save threatened property or life; the Federal Government must pay no less than 75 percent of hazardous mitigation attempts; the Federal Government are required to pay no less than 75 percent to damaged facilities; the Federal Government must not pay any less than 75 percent for debris removal costs; and must pay 100 percent towards individual assistance including \$25,000 or more.” With a formal declaration, these costs can be supplied by other states across the country that were not affected by a disaster at all. Many governors decided to manipulate the stipulations of this act by receiving money nationally during situations where it may not have required it.

Local Authority and Constitutional Disaster Response

In conclusion, our founding fathers designed the United States of America to remain without tyranny. Their construction of our Constitution added measures that removed excessive power from the Government. Local and State governments should be able to provide for themselves during disasters without Federal or other states' influence. Federal management has been questionable after many disasters throughout history, but what cannot be forgotten is how local communities work together to save lives. Hurricane Harvey is a prime example of disaster response; many people chose to take the initiative to save lives across areas destroyed by the storm. If there were more of a chance for local and state governments to supply appropriate management towards emergencies, then Federal involvement would not be needed, which would result in a quicker and more effective emergency management plan.

References

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