

State Budget To Provide \$60 Million For Disaster Relief Reserve

By Administrator
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The state budget will create a Reserve for Disaster Relief and transfer \$60 million to the fund for emergency response, risk management, and infrastructure development needs in the event of another natural disaster in North Carolina. The state's 2018 appropriation for disaster relief will follow a \$100 million allocation in the Disaster Relief Act of 2016 and another \$100 million provided by the state General Assembly in the Disaster Relief Act of 2017.

“It is our duty to taxpaying families and businesses to save and prepare for unexpected emergencies just like they do,” said House Speaker Tim Moore. “In addition to our record rainy day reserve fund, the Reserve for Disaster Relief will work to keep our citizens secure in the event of a natural disaster.”

Over \$25 million of the Reserve for Disaster Relief will be used for housing needs like elevation, acquisition, and mitigation reconstruction for residences not covered by federal grant programs.

The Reserve for Disaster Relief's housing fund will also enable low to moderate income homeowners to purchase residences and provide flood insurance subsidies for affected citizens.

“Representing some of the Eastern North Carolina communities that were hardest hit by Hurricane Matthew, I have seen firsthand how critical this assistance is to those trying to rebuild in its aftermath,” said Sen. Danny Britt (R-Robeson and Columbus.) “I am proud of state lawmakers’ ongoing commitment to helping families and communities recover from this disaster.”

More than \$9 million of the transfer will be allocated among the Department of Environmental Quality, the Department of Public Safety's Division of Emergency Management, and the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services for disaster preparation efforts, equipment and training.

More than \$14 million of the Reserve for Disaster Relief will transfer to the State Emergency Response and Disaster Relief Fund to provide a state match for federal assistance.

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“This is welcome news for the people of Eastern North Carolina who are still in need of assistance,” said Rep. John Bell (R-Wayne), the state House Majority Leader and chairman of the House Select Committee on Disaster Relief. “From the very beginning, I made a promise to these folks that they would not be forgotten. The creation of this reserve fund and the allocation of more funding is another important step in that effort.

“As government red tape from the governor’s administration continues to slow down the recovery effort, I will fight to make sure this money gets to the victims and the people who have been desperately waiting for help.”

Another \$10 million of the Reserve for Disaster Relief will be directed to infrastructure grants through the Office of State Budget and Management and Golden L.E.A.F. to provide assistance to local governments in relief efforts following the western wildfires, Tropical Storms Julia and Hermine, and Hurricane Matthew.