

Governor Cooper Calls For \$1.5 Billion Hurricane Florence Recovery Package

By Administrator

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Governor Roy Cooper shared preliminary damage estimates from Florence total almost \$13 billion. To cover the state portion of recovery, Cooper recommends a robust \$1.5 billion package to tackle a smarter, stronger recovery.

“Hurricane Florence devastated our state and left families, businesses and farmers reeling from the impact,” said Governor Cooper. “From this devastation we must seize the opportunity to rebuild smarter and stronger. I have spent the last month visiting survivors, surveying damage, thanking volunteers and first responders, and I know that we will come out better from this tragedy if we can work together.”

Gov. Cooper’s recommends that the legislature make an initial down payment by funding \$750 million, or half of the total state portion, when it returns for special session next week.

For context, Hurricane Matthew caused \$4.8 billion in damages and Hurricane Floyd caused between \$7 and \$9.4 billion in damages when adjusted for inflation, meaning Florence caused roughly as much damage as Floyd and Matthew combined.

Cooper’s recommendations include the following highlights: □

- * \$176 million for a Homeowner Repair and Rehabilitation Fund to help homeowners and renters

- * \$180 million for the State Acquisition and Relocation Fund to buyout, acquire and reconstruct homes outside the 100-year floodplain

- * \$50 million for the Housing Finance Agency to address the shortage of affordable housing

- * \$12 million for the Back@Home Rapid Rehousing Program

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- * \$20 million for small business loans and grants

- * \$5 million in assistance for Historically Underutilized Businesses

- * \$200 million for the NC Farmer Recovery Reinvestment Program to help farmers

- * \$75 million for the NC Farmer Resiliency Fund for hog farm buyouts and incentives to convert open lagoons

- * \$12 million in Commercial Fishing Assistance

- * \$25 million for Wastewater and Drinking Water Grants to promote resiliency to help systems withstand future storms

- * \$25 million to Golden LEAF to provide infrastructure grants to restore water and sewer systems and repair storm drainage systems

- * \$25 million to the Clean Water Management Trust Fund for flood abatement and surface water quality protection and improvement

- * \$5 million for a Dam Repair Cost Share Fund

- * \$88 million for flood-mapping projects, flood mitigation studies and planning

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- * \$14 million to the City of Lumberton to support floodgates for the VFW Road underpass

- * \$25 million to help local governments with an Emergency Repairs and Renovation Reserve

- * \$25 million to Golden LEAF to help local governments repair and rebuild government facilities

- * \$50 million to leverage federal transportation money to build more resilient roads to mitigate effects of extreme weather

- * \$25 million in Flexible Emergency Funding for Public School Operations

- * \$10 million for Stay-in-School Assistance to help university and community college students

- * \$47 million for Mental Health Services

- * \$3 million for Substance Use Treatment Programs

- * \$10 million to establish the Office of Recovery and Resiliency to streamline recovery programming and assistance

- * \$13 million to Department of Environmental Quality to address critical operational support and staffing for responding to and recovering from disasters

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- * \$10 million in Rebuilding and Capacity Grants to help financially distressed local governments to support two-person rebuilding teams

- * \$10 million in Emergency Financial Assistance Grants for local governments that need immediate cash flow assistance

- * \$24 million in Cash Flow Assistance to Distressed Agencies to help when federal awards greatly exceed small, local government operating budgets and cash reserves

□ Governor Cooper said his team is ready to work with legislative leaders in a bipartisan effort to get resources to North Carolinians who need them most. The General Assembly will convene October 15 to consider how much aid to provide.