

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA

SESSION 2025

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HOUSE BILL 251

Committee Substitute Favorable 3/18/25

Short Title: Disaster Response Funding/Nondiscrimination.

(Public)

Sponsors:

Referred to:

March 3, 2025

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

2 AN ACT TO PROHIBIT DISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF POLITICAL
3 AFFILIATION IN THE PROVISION OF STATE DISASTER RECOVERY
4 ASSISTANCE.

5 Whereas, the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
6 controls and manages the distribution of the Community Development Block Grant Disaster
7 Recovery (CDBG-DR) awards authorized by the United States Congress; and

8 Whereas, the State of North Carolina does not have direct control over how
9 CDBG-DR funds and other federal financial and operational assistance program funds are
10 awarded to qualifying individuals and businesses; and

11 Whereas, the State of North Carolina, through the North Carolina General Assembly,
12 does have control over how State disaster recovery programs, including financial, operational,
13 and housing assistance, are distributed to its residents; and

14 Whereas, Section 19 of Article I of the North Carolina Constitution guarantees that
15 "[n]o person shall be denied the equal protection of the laws; nor shall any person be subjected
16 to discrimination by the State because of race, color, religion, or national origin."; and

17 Whereas, the State of Florida has filed a complaint against the Federal Emergency
18 Management Agency in the Southern District of Florida alleging an actionable conspiracy to
19 interfere with civil rights through 42 U.S.C. § 1985, which allows for those who have been denied
20 equal protection, privileges, or immunities under the law to sue those who engaged in conspiracy
21 against them, on the basis of political affiliation; Now, therefore,

22 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

23 **SECTION 1.** G.S. 166A-19.1 reads as rewritten:

24 **"§ 166A-19.1. Purposes.**

25 The purposes of this Article are to set forth the authority and responsibility of the Governor,
26 State agencies, and local governments in prevention of, preparation for, response to, and recovery
27 from natural or man-made emergencies or hostile military or paramilitary action and to do the
28 following:

29 ...

30 (5) Provide for disaster recovery assistance from both federal and State funding
31 sources to all United States citizens and legal residents of North Carolina
32 affected by states of emergency and disaster declarations free from
33 discrimination on the basis of political affiliation or political speech."

34 **SECTION 2.** Article 1A of Chapter 166A of the General Statutes is amended by
35 adding a new section to read:

36 **"§ 166A-19.4. Nondiscrimination in State disaster recovery assistance.**



1 (a) No United States citizen or legal resident shall be denied or discriminated against by
2 the State or its agencies and employees for disaster recovery assistance on the basis of political
3 affiliation or political speech.

4 (b) Any person who knowingly violates this section shall be guilty of a Class I felony."

5 **SECTION 3.** G.S. 166A-19.41 reads as rewritten:

6 **"§ 166A-19.41. State emergency assistance funds.**

7 (a) Governor May Make Funds Available for Emergency Assistance. – In the event of a
8 gubernatorially or legislatively declared state of emergency, the Governor may make State funds
9 available for emergency assistance as authorized by this section. Any State funds made available
10 by the Governor for emergency assistance may be administered through State emergency
11 assistance programs which may be established by the Governor upon the declaration of a state of
12 emergency. It is the intent of the General Assembly in authorizing the Governor to make State
13 funds available for emergency assistance and in authorizing the Governor to establish State
14 emergency assistance programs to provide State assistance for recovery from those emergencies
15 for which federal assistance under the Stafford Act is either not available or does not adequately
16 meet the needs of the citizens of the State in the emergency area.

17 ...

18 (e) Any State emergency assistance in the form of grants must be administered free from
19 discrimination. No applicant for any State emergency assistance in the form of grants made
20 available pursuant to this section shall be required to provide any personal demographic
21 information unless that information is necessary to award the grant or is otherwise required by
22 State or federal law."

23 **SECTION 4.** Section 2 of this act becomes effective December 1, 2025, and applies
24 to offenses committed on or after that date. The remainder of this act is effective when it becomes
25 law.