

**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

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT TO PROHIBIT DISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF POLITICAL
AFFILIATION IN THE PROVISION OF STATE DISASTER RECOVERY
ASSISTANCE.

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

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

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

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

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

SECTION 1. G.S. 166A-19.1 reads as rewritten:
"§ 166A-19.1. Purposes.

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

...

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

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

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



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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.