

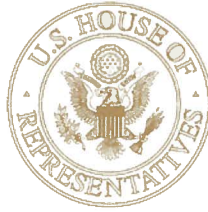
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October 5, 2018

The Honorable Greg Abbott
Governor of Texas
State Insurance Building
1100 San Jacinto Blvd.
Austin, Texas 78701

Governor Abbott,

I am pleased to share that President Trump signed H.R. 302 into law today. This important piece of federal legislation makes much needed changes to the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act. While this bill contains many good changes, I'd like to bring your attention to a provision that has the potential to positively impact individual homeowners affected by Hurricane Harvey as well as the Tax Day floods of 2016.

The enacted legislation includes a section, which Senator John Cornyn and I spearheaded, that provides a process to waive the Prohibition on Duplication of Benefits for disaster survivors.

As you know, previous law completely prohibited disaster survivors who took a Small Business Administration (SBA) loan from later being eligible for a potential Community Development Block Grant – Disaster Relief (CDBG-DR) award. I disagreed with this provision and have worked tirelessly to have it changed. A loan and a grant are not the same and should not be treated as such.

In an effort to allow states flexibility and avoid a one-size-fits-all approach to disaster recovery, the Duplication of Benefits provision in this new law is triggered by the Governor of a State requesting a waiver from the President. Upon receipt, the President must approve or deny any request within 45 days.

You and I have discussed this matter previously with FEMA Administrator Brock Long and I appreciate your past support of this provision. As such, I am requesting that you immediately request this Duplication of Benefits waiver, so our constituents may receive this relief as soon as possible.

Should you or your staff have any questions regarding this new provision of Federal law or my request today, please do not hesitate to contact me or my staff.

I thank you for your strong leadership in helping Texans recover from Hurricane Harvey and appreciate your prompt attention to this request.

Sincerely,


John Culberson