

Recent Funding Increases for FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance

Updated July 27, 2022

Introduction

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) [Hazard Mitigation Assistance](#) programs have all received additional funding in the 117th Congress, particularly through the [Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act](#) (IIJA).

Over the years, post-disaster mitigation has received significantly more funding than pre-disaster mitigation. [GAO found](#) that of the approximately \$11.3 billion in mitigation funding obligated from FY2010 to FY2018, 88% was for post-disaster grants through the [Hazard Mitigation Grant Program](#) (HMGP) and Public Assistance (PA). FEMA's competitive pre-disaster grant programs, the [Flood Mitigation Assistance program](#) (FMA) and the [Pre-Disaster Mitigation Grant Program](#) (PDM) accounted for about 12% of the total; see [Figure 1](#).

Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC)

Funding for pre-disaster mitigation was changed by the [Disaster Recovery Reform Act of 2018](#), which authorized the President to set aside from the [Disaster Relief Fund](#) (DRF), for every major disaster declaration, an amount equal to 6% of the total funding awarded under [seven sections](#) of the [Stafford Act](#). Based on historical disaster expenditures, FEMA's expectation was that this set-aside would be \$300-\$500 million per year; however, the [COVID-19 major disaster declarations](#) resulted in additional funding. As of June 30, 2022, [\\$2.022 billion was set aside](#) in the DRF for pre-disaster mitigation.

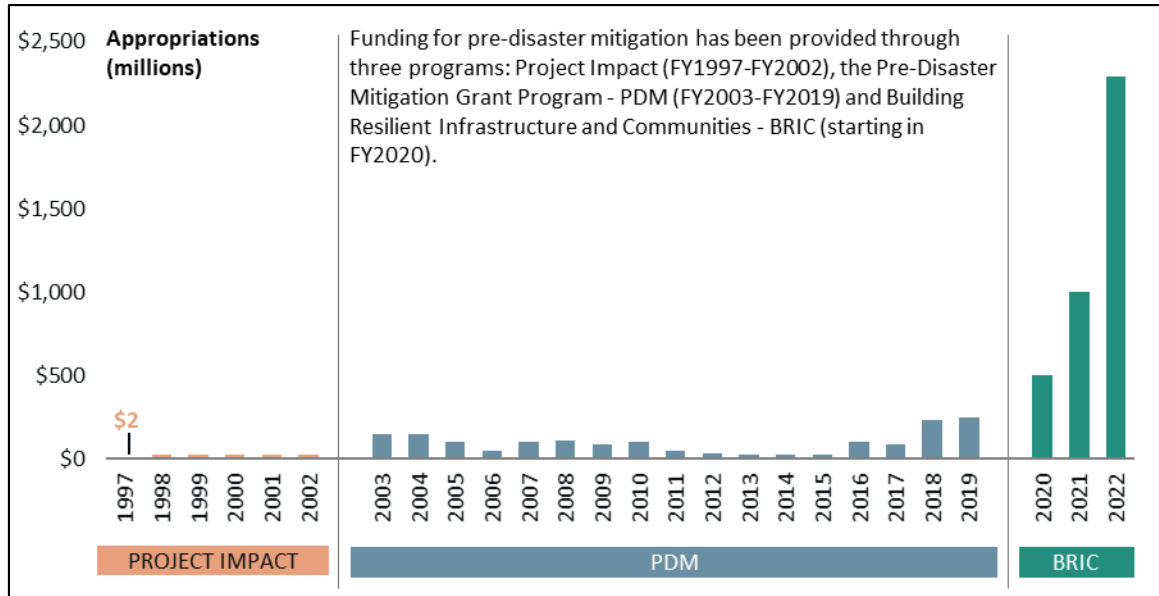
The [BRIC Program](#) began in FY2020, with [\\$500 million available for BRIC in FY2020](#) and [\\$1 billion available in FY2021](#). The [IIJA](#) appropriated \$1 billion for BRIC, with \$200 million in each of FY2022-FY2026. This funding is [in addition to the 6% set-aside](#).

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IN11733

President Biden announced on July 20, 2022 that [\\$2.3 billion would be available for BRIC in FY2022](#). FEMA gave more detailed numbers, with \$186.5 million from the IIJA funding and \$2.0185 billion from the DRF.

Figure I. Funding for Pre-Disaster Mitigation FY1997-FY2022



Sources: CRS Report RL34537, *FEMA's Pre-Disaster Mitigation Program: Overview and Issues*; FEMA, *National Pre-Disaster Mitigation Fund, Fiscal Year 2017 Report to Congress*, September 1, 2017, p. 4; FEMA Notices of Funding Opportunity (NOFOs) for PDM 2017, 2018, and 2019; FEMA NOFOs for BRIC FY2020 and FY2021; and [White House Fact Sheet](#), July 20, 2022.

Flood Mitigation Assistance

FEMA also operates the FMA program, which is available only to [communities that participate in the NFIP](#) (National Flood Insurance Program). [\\$200 million was available for FMA in FY2020](#) and [\\$160 million was available in FY2021](#). [Twenty-six states did not submit FMA applications in FY2020](#) and [31 states did not apply in FY2021](#).

The IIJA appropriated \$3.5 billion for FMA, with \$700 million for each of FY2022 to FY2026, and provides a 90% federal cost share for a property (1) that is located in a census tract with a CDC [Social Vulnerability Index](#) score of not less than 0.5001; or (2) that serves as a primary residence for individuals with a household income of not more than 100% of the applicable area median income.

On March 14, 2022, FEMA announced the first initiative to be funded with the IIJA funding, the [Swift Current Initiative Funding Opportunity](#). The goal of Swift Current is to obligate FMA dollars for NFIP-insured and [substantially damaged](#) properties as quickly and equitably as possible after a flood. Swift Current allocates \$60 million to Louisiana, Mississippi, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. These states were selected because they were affected by Hurricane Ida and have the highest [repetitive loss](#) and [severe repetitive loss](#) of NFIP-insured unmitigated properties, as well as the highest total insurance claims within their respective [FEMA regions](#).

The Hazard Mitigation Grant Program and the COVID-19 Disasters

HMGP assistance is triggered by a [major disaster declaration](#) or [Fire Management Assistance Grant](#) (FMAG) under the [Stafford Act](#), awarded [on a sliding scale](#) as a percentage of the estimated amount of total federal assistance for the disaster. States with a FEMA-approved [Enhanced Hazard Mitigation Plan](#) before the disaster are eligible for HMGP funding of 20% of the total amount of disaster assistance.

States, territories, and tribes (STTs) can use HMGP funding for mitigation projects for any type of natural hazard and for any eligible activity that reduces risk and builds resilience. HMGP funding does not have to be used for the particular incident or disaster type for which it was allocated. For example, funding allocated for wildfires in one county could be used for flood mitigation activities in a different county, if eligible.

FEMA [announced](#) on August 5, 2021, that \$3.46 billion in HMGP funding was made available to states, territories, and tribes (STTs) with [major disaster declarations for the COVID-19 pandemic](#) for 4% of eligible relief costs (see **Error! Reference source not found.**). This funding is not restricted to pandemic-related mitigation activities. Four percent is a lower percentage than is usually awarded for HMPG, but the total funding of [\\$3.46 billion](#) represents the largest amount of HMGP funding in a single fiscal year. (The largest amount previously was [\\$2.29 billion in FY2005](#).)

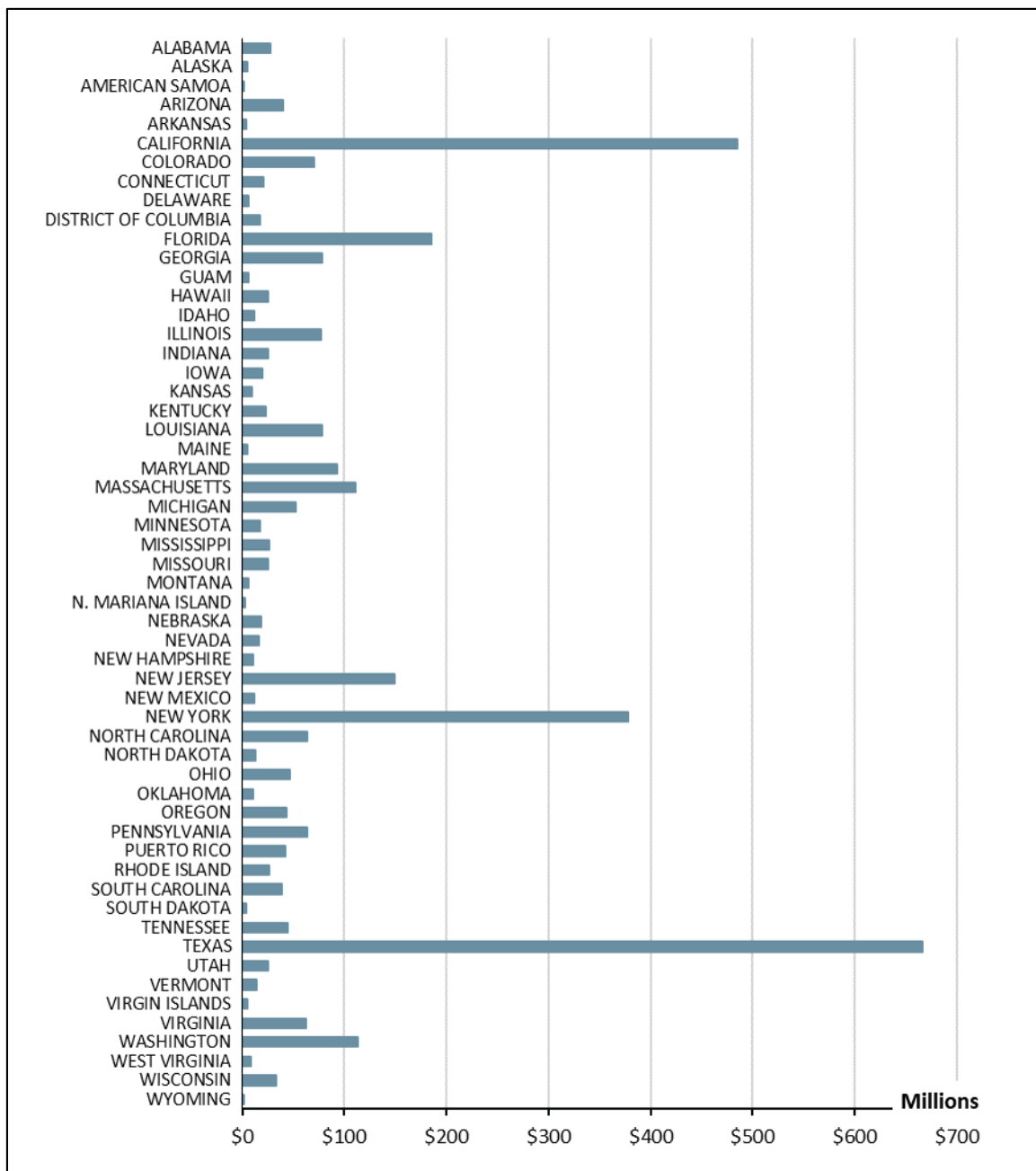
Congressional Community Projects

Funding was [appropriated in FY2022](#) for the PDM program for 68 [Congressional Community Projects](#), (commonly referred to as [earmarks](#), which were restored by the 117th Congress in both the [House](#) and the [Senate](#)), with awards totaling \$153,922,408 to one tribe and 28 states (some states received multiple awards).

Safeguarding Tomorrow Revolving Loan Program

A new source of hazard mitigation funding will be available from a new program to be known as the [Safeguarding Tomorrow Revolving Loan Program](#), which was created by the Safeguarding Tomorrow through Ongoing Risk Mitigation Act of 2020 ([STORM Act](#)). This law amended the Stafford Act by authorizing FEMA to enter into agreements with STTs to establish hazard mitigation [revolving loan](#) funds. The STORM Act authorized the appropriation of \$100 million annually for FY2022 and FY2023 to make grants to capitalize new revolving loan funds. The IIJA appropriated \$500 million for the revolving loan program, with \$100 million for each of FY2022 through FY2026. FEMA's goal is for a program launch and Notice of Funding Opportunity to be published towards the end of calendar year 2022.

Figure 2. Hazard Mitigation Grant Program Funding for Major Disaster Declarations Related to the COVID-19 Pandemic



Source: FEMA, [HMGP Allocations for COVID-19 Declarations](#).

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