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CONTACT: Phil Anderson
(202) 315-5100

BuildStrong Statement on the Introduction of the Disaster Recovery Reform Act

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The BuildStrong Coalition commends House Transportation & Infrastructure Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Management Subcommittee Chairman Lou Barletta (R-PA) and Ranking Member Hank Johnson (D-GA) for today’s introduction of H.R. 4460, the Disaster Recovery Reform Act. The bipartisan legislation seeks to help American communities rebuild and recover while providing them with the resources they need to prevent future destruction. The bill’s introduction follows a devastating string of hurricanes and wildfires that cost over 260 American lives and caused more than \$300 billion in damages.

Research shows that every dollar spent proactively on pre-disaster mitigation saves between four and eight dollars in future disaster costs. The Disaster Recovery Reform Act would leverage this cost-saving power to ensure that the country is prepared before the next disaster. Key BuildStrong Coalition-supported provisions include:

1. **Federal Cost Share Reform Incentives:** Incentivizes states to invest in resiliency by allowing the federal cost share to be increased based on nationally-acknowledged resiliency standards put in place pre-disaster.
2. **Pre-Disaster Mitigation Fund:** Leverages the life- and cost-saving power of prevention to provide states with access to on-budget pre-disaster mitigation funding for activities that provide a measurable reduction of risk. This would be accomplished by shifting 6% of annual funding from the Post-Disaster Relief Fund to the Pre-Disaster Mitigation Grant Program.
3. **Post-Disaster Building Code Funding:** Helps states and communities build to stronger standards post-disaster by ensuring that building code implementation and enforcement funding is available to affected areas post-disaster.

The Disaster Recovery Reform Act represents the culmination of years of disaster relief reform efforts in Congress, including the historic leadership of Representative Mario Diaz-Balart (R-FL) and the recent introduction of the SMART Rebuilding Act by Representative Jeff Denham (R-CA). The BuildStrong Coalition applauds Congressmen Diaz-Balart and Denham for their pioneering accomplishments.

“We’re pleased that Chairman Barletta, Ranking Member Johnson, and their colleagues in Congress are taking serious steps to address our country’s broken disaster spending model,” said Jimi Grande, BuildStrong Coalition Chairman. “As Congress prepares another much-needed

disaster supplemental to help communities recover from recent events, the Disaster Recovery Reform Act would ensure that this spending is in an investment in our nation that keeps the safety of Americans and the security of their tax dollars in mind.”

The BuildStrong Coalition is a group of firefighters, emergency responders, insurers, engineers, architects, contractors and manufacturers, as well as consumer organizations, code specialists, and many others committed to building a more resilient America.

Learn more about the Disaster Recovery Reform Act and the BuildStrong Coalition campaign to make America resilient again (#MARA) at mara.buildstrongamerica.com.

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