

Adams, NC Democrats Introduce Legislation to Speed Up Hurricane Helene Recovery

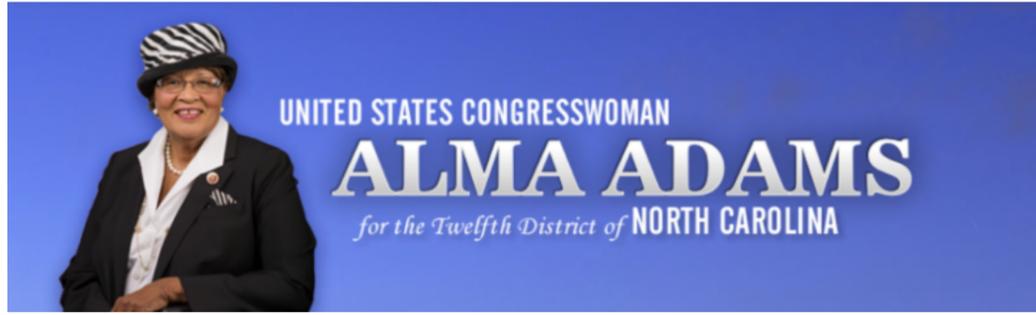


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WASHINGTON, DC—Today, **Congresswoman Alma S. Adams, Ph.D. (NC-12)** alongside **Representatives Deborah Ross (NC-02), Valerie Foushee (NC-04), and Don Davis (NC-01)** introduced the **[FEMA Administrative Reform Act](#)** which would help accelerate the flow of federal disaster recovery dollars to Western North Carolina in the wake of Hurricane Helene by reducing red tape instituted by the Trump administration.

In June, Secretary of Homeland Security Kristi Noem implemented a policy requiring her personal review and approval of any contract above \$100,000, including for disaster response. This policy has drastically slowed the flow of desperately needed recovery dollars to Western North Carolina and **[has drawn scrutiny from FEMA employees](#)** and **[bipartisan scrutiny on Capitol Hill](#)**. In addition to slowing aid for Western North Carolina, the policy has created disaster aid backlogs across the country.

The *FEMA Administrative Reform Act* would prohibit the Secretary of Homeland Security from implementing any policy that would require their personal approval of Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) expenditures of \$100,000 or more.

“It has been over a year since Hurricane Helene devastated Western North Carolina, but red tape created by the Trump administration continues to delay the relief our communities are owed,” **said Congresswoman Adams**. “Sec. Noem is more focused on sending federal agents to terrorize North Carolina cities than approving the aid North Carolinians are relying on to rebuild their lives. We cannot let bureaucracy impede recovery. I’m proud to join my colleagues in introducing this bill so our citizens can finally get the help they deserve.”

“After promising his full support for Western North Carolina during his first official visit of his second term, President Trump and his administration have hung Western North Carolinians out to dry,” **said Congresswoman Ross**. “Their disastrous approval process has created unnecessary challenges and delays for communities still trying to recover and rebuild their lives over a year after Hurricane Helene devastated our state. Secretary Noem has been too busy posing for immigration raid photos to approve much-needed funding for North Carolinians recovering from a historic disaster. It’s clear that Congress needs to take action, and this deeply misguided policy needs to be reversed.”

“It’s been over a year since Hurricane Helene upended lives and communities across Western North Carolina, yet recovery has been stalled by reckless political decisions in Washington,” **said Congresswoman Foushee**. “Instead of empowering FEMA to respond to disasters quickly, the Trump Administration has slowed critical assistance needed to rebuild, leaving local governments and residents to shoulder the costs on their own. Communities cannot wait any longer for the help they’ve been promised. I’m proud to join my colleagues in introducing this legislation that will remove these unnecessary obstacles put in place by this Administration, ensuring disaster recovery dollars reach the communities that need them.”

New red tape instituted by the Trump administration creates additional challenges for local governments, who are already facing massive expenses and a difficult road to recovery. Local governments in Western North Carolina—often with small staffs and budgets—have spent millions of local government dollars for debris removal and other efforts, and they depend on the certainty and speed of reimbursement from the federal government. The financial strain caused by this policy hurts North Carolina communities that are not only trying to rebuild, but also trying to keep essential services operating, including schools, first responders, public transportation, trash pickup, and more. It can also impact bond ratings, potentially making it more expensive for local governments to build schools, roads, and other infrastructure in the medium to

long term.

Full text of the bill is available [here](#).

For press inquiries, contact Congresswoman Adams Communications Director Kaleb Harmon at kaleb.harmon@mail.house.gov or (202) 875-4063.

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Congresswoman Alma S. Adams, Ph.D. represents North Carolina's 12th Congressional District (Charlotte, Mecklenburg County) and serves on the House Committee on Agriculture and the House Committee on Education & Workforce, where she serves as ranking member of the Higher Education and Workforce Development (HEWD) Subcommittee.

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