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PRESS RELEASE

Cmr. George P. Bush applauds legislative filings in support of recommendations from GLO's Hurricane Harvey: Texas at Risk report

Read the report at recovery.texas.gov/texasatrisk

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 11, 2019

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AUSTIN — Today Commissioner George P. Bush applauded a multitude of bills filed by both members of the Texas Senate and House relating to recommendations from [Hurricane Harvey: Texas At Risk](#), a report released by the Texas General Land Office on the one-year anniversary of landfall. The report captured lessons learned from a year of housing assistance recovery and made numerous recommendations at all levels of government with the primary objective of protecting Texans in advance of the next disaster and improving subsequent recovery efforts.

"Hurricane Harvey was a historic storm and the response from the state of Texas has been nothing short of extraordinary," said Commissioner Bush. "The Texas Legislature's thoughtful efforts to improve recovery efforts demonstrates their leadership and dedication to Texans. I look forward to continuing to engage in these critical policy discussions."

The GLO report on Hurricane Harvey discussed the impediments to disaster recovery and made recommendations at the federal, state, and local level on how to improve response and recovery. On Feb. 5, 2019, during his biennial State of the State Address, Governor Greg Abbott named disaster response an emergency item of the 86th Session of the Texas Legislature. Since bill filing began, Texas Legislators in both chambers have filed various pieces of legislation to address several of the following recommendations in [Hurricane Harvey: Texas At Risk](#):

- Creation of a Business Advisory Council to bring private sector innovation to public sector disaster response
- Strengthening flood control coordination, management and planning
- Strengthening building codes in flood, hurricane, and other disaster-prone areas
- Greater transparency for flood disclosures for buyers and renters
- Development of more robust public information campaigns for disaster programs

- Codifying Indefinite Quantity Contracts as requirements to ensure pre-positioning of disaster response and recovery services contracts prior to disasters
- Increasing administrative flexibility for faster response time following disaster declarations

At the federal level, the report also made recommendations such as overhauling the Stafford Act to enable use of more efficient and cost-effective methods of short-term housing assistance. Changes would include moving away from inefficient and costly temporary housing including RVs and manufactured housing units. Instead resources should be focused towards long-term solutions such as providing more immediate general repairs such as gutting of wet dry wall, mold mitigation, and elevation. Quicker repairs enable people to return home - as well as to work and school - quicker and save tax payer funds.

Additionally, changes to the Stafford Act would also benefit long term recovery. Statutory language should be changed to allow new housing technologies such as 3D printed homes and RAPIDOs, which are low cost, pre-assembled modules that can be quickly - and permanently - placed at a much lower cost than currently allowed programs. The report also recommends making the short-term assistance program a block grant, thus allowing states to utilize federal funds to respond more quickly to housing needs.

"As I've often said, preparedness and mitigation are the best remedies to address the threats posed by natural disasters," said Commissioner Bush. "Texas is a state that thrives on innovation and determination. Our disaster recovery processes should be equally thoughtful and innovative. "Texas continues to lead the nation as we confront the next natural disaster."

As the first state agency in Texas history to partner with FEMA on the short-term housing mission, as well as the designated lead for administration of the long-term Community Development Block Grant for Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) program, the GLO has been uniquely positioned to identify and assess issues that hinder housing recovery efforts. Hundreds of local, state and federal officials contributed their candor and expertise to the drafting of the report recommendations, which provides a comprehensive road map for innovating flood mitigation and making recovery more expeditious and cost effective in the future.

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