

By: Cortez

H.R. No. 987

R E S O L U T I O N

1           WHEREAS, The Public Assistance Program of the Federal  
2 Emergency Management Agency provides grants to state and local  
3 governments to assist them with their response to and recovery from  
4 disasters; and

5           WHEREAS, Under current FEMA policy, the agency sets a  
6 gross-value financial damage threshold that must be met before a  
7 disaster declaration is issued to allow qualification for the  
8 Public Assistance Program; and

9           WHEREAS, Property values often vary greatly in counties and  
10 cities struck by catastrophic events, and some communities within  
11 an affected area have lower than average property values that place  
12 them at a severe disadvantage in seeking aid; and

13           WHEREAS, An economically distressed community may suffer the  
14 same degree of destruction as an affluent neighborhood nearby, but  
15 the dollar amount of damage would be less because the original  
16 property value was much lower; as a result, a less prosperous  
17 community might not be able to meet the gross-value financial  
18 damage threshold established by FEMA, even if the impact of the  
19 disaster was just as significant as in the other communities; and

20           WHEREAS, The need for disaster relief in a community is not  
21 evenly reflected in the dollar amount of damage, and communities  
22 should not be penalized because they were less affluent than their  
23 neighbors before misfortune befell the entire area; now, therefore,  
24 be it

1           RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 83rd Texas  
2 Legislature hereby respectfully request that the Federal Emergency  
3 Management Agency amend its financial threshold criteria for  
4 providing disaster aid to allow assistance to communities whose  
5 average property value is lower than the applicable local county or  
6 city average; and, be it further

7           RESOLVED, That the chief clerk forward an official copy of  
8 this resolution to the administrator of the Federal Emergency  
9 Management Agency.