



## ***Measuring the Cost of Disasters Act***

**Introduced By:** Senators Peter Welch (D-Vt.); Ed Markey (D-Mass.); Chris Van Hollen (D-Md.); Jeff Merkley (D-Ore.); Angela Alsobrooks (D-Md.); Richard Blumenthal (D-Conn.); Jack Reed (D-R.I.); Sheldon Whitehouse (D-R.I.); Michael Bennet (D-Colo.); Cory Booker (D-N.J.); Tina Smith (D-Minn.); Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.); Ron Wyden (D-Ore.); Martin Heinrich (D-N.M.)

### **Background:**

Since 1980, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has maintained a database of all weather disasters in the United States totaling at least \$1 billion in damage. From 1980-2024, the Billion Dollar Weather and Climate Disasters database recorded [403](#) weather and climate disasters resulting in at least \$1 billion in damages. Combined, losses from these events exceed [\\$2.9 trillion](#). Over the same time period, Vermont experienced [19](#) natural disasters with at least \$1 billion in losses, including the catastrophic flooding in July 2023.

The database has been essential in tracking how an exponential increase in climate-driven natural disasters in the last two decades has raised costs associated with disaster recovery. Last year alone, the United States experienced [27](#) individual weather and climate disasters over \$1 billion in damages, totaling more than [\\$182.7 billion](#)—the fourth highest on record behind 2017, 2005, and 2022. As the severity and cost of natural disasters continue to rise, research tracking the type and frequency of extreme weather events is crucial to ensuring the efficient allocation of resources and effective resilience strategies.

However, in May 2025, the Trump Administration [discontinued](#) NOAA's Billion Dollar Weather and Climate Disasters database as part of its efforts to destroy programs and research related to climate change. Cancelling this publicly available database threatens emergency preparedness, undercuts science research vital to fighting climate change, and weakens national and community-level efforts to reduce the cost of disasters.

### **Legislation:**

The *Measuring the Cost of Disasters Act* would reverse the Trump Administration's decision to terminate NOAA's Billion Dollar Weather and Climate Disasters database in order to keep families and researchers accurately informed about the cost of natural disasters. The legislation would require NOAA to restore and maintain the database to continue collecting and publishing information on natural disasters resulting in at least \$1 billion in damage each year in the United States.

The bill would also allow NOAA to expand its data collection to include severe weather events that result in less than \$1 billion in damage—if staffing and resources allow—to broaden our understanding of costs and damages associated with all types of extreme storms and disasters.