

Michael J. Riley Sr., experienced in emergency management, comments on the call for amendment of Stafford Act §404

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NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA, UNITED STATES, October 25, 2018 /EINPresswire.com/ -- In a new blog article, Michael J. Riley, Jr. provides information related to a possible amendment of Section 404 of the Stafford Act.

Formally named the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (hereinafter "Stafford Act"), the law, which was passed in 1988, provides the framework for federal disaster and emergency management through the Federal Emergency Management Agency ("FEMA"). The Stafford Act amended the Disaster Relief Act of 1974 and authorizes FEMA to provide financial and logistical assistance upon a presidential disaster declaration.

The Stafford Act has been amended several times since its passage in 1988 and has its share of critics regarding areas it needs to be improved on. One particular subject that has received recent attention is the call to amend section 404 of the Act.



Michael J. Riley, Sr.
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The Stafford Act authorizes FEMA to oversee the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program under section 404 and section 406 of the Act. Section 406 is the more limited of the two, providing

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*Michael Jerome Riley, Sr.,
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discretionary funding to mitigation measures in conjunction with repairs of disaster damaged facilities. Such funding is limited to disaster declared counties and eligible damaged facilities. Section 404 is the broader program. FEMA provides funding to the states under section 404 and states may use them anywhere in the state, not just disaster declared counties. Such funding is used to prevent or reduce damages caused in the future.

Current FEMA Administrator Brock Long testified about the needed changes in section 404 of the Stafford Act in his Senate testimony on October 31, 2017, before the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental

Affairs. “The problem with the way the system is established is you have to get hit to have an extraordinary amount of post-disaster hurricane grant mitigation funding. I believe that’s not the right way of doing business.” Administrator Long went on to explain “[t]he 404 money, it would be amazing if we could work with the Senate and this committee to move that to the front side. On average, I believe we put out \$700 million or \$800 million in post-disaster mitigation funding. Why are we not doing that on the front side and get it out of recovery and reduce the

complexities of recovery and put it up front?" Democratic Senator John Tester noted during the hearing that every dollar spent on the front end of a disaster would save four dollars on the back end.

[Mr. Riley](#) explains. By allowing FEMA to distribute 404 funding for pre-disaster mitigation, the funds could be put to much more efficient and meaningful use. Currently, 404 funding is only available after disaster strikes and presidential declaration issued. Once those conditions are met, then 404 funding is available as part of the recovery process to mitigate damages from future disasters. Some commentators noted that giving FEMA flexibility to anticipate and prepare for disasters beforehand would certainly serve the long-term interests of the nation and promote more efficient allocation of resources.

Disclaimer: The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the author. They do not purport to reflect the opinions or views of FEMA or any government agency.

About [Michael Jerome Riley, Sr.](#)

Trained as a lawyer, J.D., University of Tennessee-Knoxville (1980), [Michael J. Riley, Sr.](#) currently serves FEMA as an Emergency Manager, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Operations Division Supervisor. Primary role is to ensure that efficient, effective communication and coordination between the Federal, State, Local, Tribal and/or Territorial (SLTT) governments at the lowest level

of the incident on behalf of the incident management organization. Ensures that all actions are consistent with and support the incident objectives and the working assignments identified in the Incident Action Plan (IAP) for each Operational Period; and clear any proposed deviation to IAP and/or incident objective. Expertise includes Small and Disadvantaged Business Enterprises, contract compliance, procurement and development issues, and Civil Rights.

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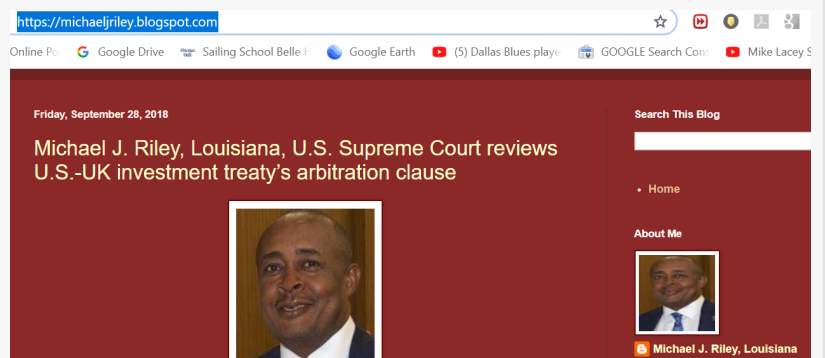
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Michael J. Riley, Sr., at work in Haiti



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