

109TH CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

H. R. 6144

To reduce vulnerability to natural disasters in foreign countries through the use of disaster mitigation techniques.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 21, 2006

Mr. BLUMENAUER introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on International Relations

A BILL

To reduce vulnerability to natural disasters in foreign countries through the use of disaster mitigation techniques.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “International Disaster
5 Risk Reduction Act of 2006”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

8 (1) The devastating impacts of natural disas-
9 ters can be mitigated by assisting communities to
10 build in safer locations, construct sturdier dwellings,

1 enforce sound building practices, and protect natural
2 ecosystems.

3 (2) By 2050, two billion people are expected to
4 be especially vulnerable to floods due to growing
5 populations, indiscriminate logging, rapid urbaniza-
6 tion, and increasing development along coasts and in
7 other hazardous regions.

8 (3) According to a study by the World Bank
9 and the United States Geological Survey during the
10 1990s, \$40 billion invested in preventive measures
11 could have saved \$280 billion in disaster relief funds
12 and saved countless lives.

13 **SEC. 3. ASSISTANCE FOR DISASTER MITIGATION EFFORTS.**

14 Section 491(b) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961
15 (22 U.S.C. 2292(b)) is amended by adding at the end the
16 following new sentence: “Assistance relating to disaster
17 preparedness under the preceding sentence shall include
18 assistance to reduce vulnerability of humans and property
19 to natural disasters through the use of disaster mitigation
20 techniques, including to assist communities to build in
21 safer locations, construct sturdier dwellings, promulgate
22 and enforce sound building codes and practices, develop
23 comprehensive land use plans that include disaster pre-
24 paredness and risk reduction, and protect natural eco-
25 systems.”.

1 **SEC. 4. INITIATIVE TO ENCOURAGE THE USE OF DISASTER**
2 **MITIGATION TECHNIQUES.**

3 (a) INITIATIVE.—The Secretary of State, in consulta-
4 tion with the heads of other appropriate departments and
5 agencies of the Government of the United States, shall de-
6 velop and implement an initiative to reduce vulnerability
7 of humans and property to natural disasters in foreign
8 countries by encouraging the use of disaster mitigation
9 techniques, including disaster mitigation techniques de-
10 scribed in section 491(b) of the Foreign Assistance Act
11 of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2292(b)), as amended by section 3
12 of this Act, by foreign governments in regions considered
13 especially vulnerable to natural disasters.

14 (b) UNITED STATES ASSISTANCE.—The initiative re-
15 quired by subsection (a) shall include the provision of as-
16 sistance under section 491(b) of the Foreign Assistance
17 Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2292(b)), as amended by section
18 3 of this Act, relating to the use of disaster mitigation
19 techniques.

20 (c) ADVISORY COMMITTEE.—The Secretary of State
21 shall appoint an advisory committee of experts in the
22 science of natural disasters and disaster mitigation, hu-
23 manitarian relief and development, international diplo-
24 macy, and professionals in the fields of urban, community,
25 and regional planning (including transportation and land
26 use), architecture, landscape architecture, and urban de-

1 sign to advise the Secretary on the development and imple-
2 mentation of the initiative required by subsection (a).

3 (d) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date
4 of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State should
5 submit to the Committee on International Relations of the
6 House of Representatives and the Committee on Foreign
7 Relations of the Senate a report that contains a descrip-
8 tion of the initiative required by subsection (a) and a plan
9 for its implementation.

10 **SEC. 5. REGULATIONS.**

11 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the
12 date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State
13 shall promulgate regulations which require that—

14 (1) efforts to reduce vulnerability to future dis-
15 asters through the use of disaster mitigation tech-
16 niques, including techniques described in section
17 491(b) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22
18 U.S.C. 2292(b)), as amended by section 3 of this
19 Act, shall be included in all United States assistance
20 programs, projects, and activities for international
21 disaster relief and rehabilitation; and

22 (2) such programs, projects, and activities may
23 only be provided in ways that reduce overall vulner-
24 ability to natural disasters in the impacted area.

1 (b) UPDATE.—The Secretary of State may periodi-
2 cally revise the regulations promulgated pursuant to sub-
3 section (a).

4 **SEC. 6. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

5 (a) IN GENERAL.—There are authorized to be appro-
6 priated for fiscal year 2007 and each subsequent fiscal
7 year such sums as may be necessary to carry out this Act
8 and the amendment made by section 3 of this Act.

9 (b) AVAILABILITY.—Amounts appropriated pursuant
10 to the authorization of appropriations under subsection (a)
11 are authorized to remain available until expended.

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