

A.R.M.O.R Act

America's Resilient Modernization & Operations for Recovery Act

A federal infrastructure initiative to protect vulnerable rural communities before, during, and after climate disasters, while creating jobs, strengthening local economies, and investing in our future.

TITLE I: PURPOSE

The ARMOR Act establishes a national resilience strategy focused on rural disaster preparedness, climate-ready infrastructure, and frontline economic revitalization. The Act creates new funding streams, job pipelines, and community-centered systems designed to protect, rebuild, and modernize regions hit hardest by climate-driven storms, power outages, flood events, and infrastructure neglect.

TITLE II: CORE GOALS

1. Pre-Disaster Investment: Shift federal strategy from reaction to preparation by funding infrastructure upgrades before catastrophe hits
 2. Equity-Based Distribution: Prioritize communities with historical underinvestment, poverty, and extreme weather exposure
 3. Workforce-Driven Rebuild: Create paid pipelines for trade students and young workers to help lead the rebuild
 4. Localized Ownership: Empower municipalities, tribes, and counties to lead projects, not just state-level gatekeepers
 5. Real-Time Resilience: Protect power, water, broadband, and emergency shelter capacity within 30 minutes of every household
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TITLE III: STRUCTURE OF THE FUND

Section 1: Funding Scope

- ARMOR creates a \$75 billion federal fund over 10 years, administered by FEMA in coordination with USDA Rural Development and the Department of Transportation
- 70% of funds are restricted for rural-designated or medically underserved areas
- 10% reserved for Tribal Nations and sovereign territories
- Local governments may apply directly, avoiding delays or obstruction at the state level

Section 2: Eligible Projects Include

- Underground utility line conversion (power, broadband, water)
 - Flood defense construction, retention ponds, and smart drainage
 - School retrofits to serve as dual-use shelters
 - Road and bridge reinforcement in flood-prone zones
 - Resilient building materials for hospitals, clinics, and housing
 - Emergency broadband nodes and communication redundancies
 - Community Resilience Hubs with stormproof infrastructure and backup power
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TITLE IV: WORKFORCE PIPELINE AND YOUTH TRADES

The ARMOR Act invests in a people-powered rebuild by creating two new pathways for long-term workforce development: one for youth and students entering the trades, and one for survivors and community leaders rebuilding after disaster.

Section 1: School-to-Rebuild Career Tracks

ARMOR will fund the creation of local apprenticeship pipelines in partnership with high schools, trade schools, and community colleges. These tracks will focus on hands-on training for industries critical to resilient infrastructure, including:

- Construction
- Plumbing
- Welding
- Renewable energy installation
- Ironwork and bridge repair

Participants in these programs will be prioritized for federal contracting opportunities on ARMOR-funded projects.

Pilot programs will launch in five districts, including NC-5, based on infrastructure vulnerability and youth unemployment rates.

Section 2: Survivor-Led Recovery and Resilience Fellowships

- ARMOR will provide targeted grants to individuals and grassroots organizations directly impacted by federally declared disasters who have emerged as frontline leaders in community-led recovery efforts. These grants will:
- Support local nonprofit and mutual aid organizations that responded to and rebuilt after disasters
- Fund their continued work designing neighborhood-scale infrastructure solutions, navigating local geography, and advocating for community-specific recovery needs
- Allow them to submit and implement community-generated resilience plans, based on their lived expertise
- ARMOR will also establish the Survivor Fellowship Program, which includes:
- Full scholarships for survivors to attend trade schools, certification programs, or community colleges in resilience-related fields such as disaster response, environmental engineering, public health, infrastructure design, or electrical work
- Paid pathways for survivors to formally lead infrastructure projects in their region
- Wraparound support to transition pain into purpose, and personal tragedy into public leadership

This section of the ARMOR Act is grounded in a core belief:

Those closest to disaster often become the clearest architects of recovery.

When their lived experience is matched with expert training and federal support, they build stronger, faster, and with deeper trust than any top-down contract could ever replicate.

TITLE V: FUNDING DISTRIBUTION FORMULA

Grants and contracts are distributed based on a national scoring system weighted by:

- Climate vulnerability risk (floodplain, fire zone, etc.)
- Percentage of population living in poverty
- Number of recent disaster declarations
- Distance from emergency services or broadband access
- Local unemployment and lack of post-secondary training options

North Carolina's 5th District ranks high on all five metrics, making it a leading candidate for early-phase funding.

TITLE VI: INTERAGENCY COORDINATION

ARMOR establishes the Office for Rural Resilience Strategy (ORRS) to:

- Coordinate across FEMA, USDA, DOT, DOE, and DOL
 - Offer planning assistance to local governments
 - Help communities apply, comply, and measure outcomes
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TITLE VII: ENFORCEMENT AND TRANSPARENCY

- All funds must be tracked via a publicly accessible resilience dashboard
 - Localities must report:
 - Budget use
 - Contractor hiring (including local and trade students)
 - Project timelines and resilience benchmarks
 - Private equity firms are banned from acquiring ARMOR-funded infrastructure assets or contracts
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TITLE VIII: NARRATIVE FRAMEWORK AND LEGISLATIVE INTENT

The intent of the ARMOR Act is to shift national disaster policy away from reactive, short-term recovery and toward proactive, people-centered preparedness. This legislation is rooted in the recognition that many rural and working-class communities suffer greater losses not because storms are stronger, but because the systems meant to protect them are weaker by design.

This bill affirms that:

- **Preparedness is not a luxury. It is a right**
- Rural communities deserve the same level of infrastructure security and long-term investment as urban centers
- The government has a moral and fiscal responsibility to prevent repeated cycles of collapse by investing in resilience before disaster strikes
- Climate disasters are increasing in frequency and severity. Any national recovery strategy must include structural reinforcement, communication redundancy, and local workforce readiness as non-negotiables

This Act also acknowledges that rural regions like North Carolina's 5th District experience layered vulnerability due to disinvestment, geographic isolation, outdated infrastructure, and a shrinking emergency workforce. ARMOR is designed to address those vulnerabilities head-on through targeted funding, equitable access, and community-anchored job creation.