

ASSEMBLY, No. 2282

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED JANUARY 27, 2020

Sponsored by:

Assemblyman JOHN ARMATO

District 2 (Atlantic)

Assemblyman VINCENT MAZZEO

District 2 (Atlantic)

Co-Sponsored by:

Assemblyman Caputo, Assemblywoman Timberlake and Assemblyman Houghtaling

SYNOPSIS

Requires DEP to study State's response to Superstorm Sandy and preparedness for future storm events.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 2/13/2020)

1 **AN ACT** concerning the State’s response to Superstorm Sandy and
2 preparedness for future storm events.

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4 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
5 *of New Jersey:*

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7 1. a. No later than one year after the date of enactment of this
8 act, the Department of Environmental Protection shall conduct an
9 analysis and submit a written report to the Governor and, pursuant
10 to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-19.1), to the Legislature
11 concerning the State’s response to the major storm that made
12 landfall in New Jersey on October 29, 2012, commonly referred to
13 as “Superstorm Sandy,” and the State’s preparedness for future
14 storm events.

15 b. In conducting the analysis required by this section, the
16 Department of Environmental Protection shall:

17 (1) review and summarize the actions taken by the State to
18 recover from Superstorm Sandy, including the status of: all shore
19 protection and dune construction projects; the Superstorm Sandy
20 Blue Acres Buyout Program; the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program
21 Elevation Program; and any other efforts, including any regulatory
22 changes, taken by the State to mitigate the effects of future storms,
23 fortify water and wastewater infrastructure, and rebuild safer, more
24 resilient communities;

25 (2) consult with the Department of Community Affairs, the
26 Department of Transportation, and the State Office of Emergency
27 Management in the Division of State Police in the Department of
28 Law and Public Safety regarding actions taken and assistance
29 programs established by those agencies in response to Superstorm
30 Sandy, and actions taken to prepare the State for future storm
31 events; and

32 (3) consult with Rutgers, The State University and any other
33 public and private entities in the State that have conducted studies
34 concerning the State’s recovery from Superstorm Sandy.

35 c. The report required by this section shall: (1) summarize the
36 review and analysis conducted pursuant to this section; (2) discuss
37 and quantify the benefits and costs associated with hazard
38 mitigation in the State; (3) evaluate the processes for individuals
39 and local governments to obtain governmental assistance, and
40 provide recommendations for standards and safeguards for the
41 treatment of individuals and local governments seeking financial
42 assistance in future storm events; (4) include recommendations for
43 legislative and administrative changes to assist the State in
44 mitigating and responding to future storm events; and (5) include
45 any other information the Department of Environmental Protection
46 deems necessary to assist the State to mitigate the effects of future
47 storms, fortify water and wastewater infrastructure, and rebuild
48 safer, more resilient communities.

1 2. This act shall take effect immediately.

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STATEMENT

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6 This bill requires the Department of Environmental Protection
7 (DEP) to conduct an analysis and submit a written report to the
8 Governor and the Legislature concerning the State's response to the
9 major storm that made landfall in New Jersey on October 29, 2012,
10 commonly referred to as "Superstorm Sandy," and the State's
11 preparedness for future storm events. The DEP is directed to
12 review and summarize the actions taken by the State to recover
13 from Superstorm Sandy, including the status of: all shore
14 protection and dune construction projects; the Superstorm Sandy
15 Blue Acres Buyout Program; the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program
16 Elevation Program; and any other efforts, including any regulatory
17 changes, taken by the State to mitigate the effects of future storms,
18 fortify water and wastewater infrastructure, and rebuild safer, more
19 resilient communities. The bill directs the DEP to consult with the
20 Department of Community Affairs, the Department of
21 Transportation, and the State Office of Emergency Management in
22 the Division of State Police in the Department of Law and Public
23 Safety regarding actions taken and assistance programs established
24 by those agencies in response to Superstorm Sandy and actions
25 taken to prepare the State for future storm events. The bill also
26 directs the DEP to consult with Rutgers, The State University and
27 any other public and private entities in the State that have
28 conducted studies concerning the State's recovery from Superstorm
29 Sandy.

30 The report required by the bill, to be submitted to the Governor
31 and the Legislature within one year after the bill is enacted into law,
32 is to: (1) summarize the review and analysis of the State's response
33 to Superstorm Sandy; (2) discuss and quantify the benefits and costs
34 associated with hazard mitigation in the State; (3) evaluate the
35 processes for individuals and local governments to obtain
36 governmental assistance, and provide recommendations for
37 standards and safeguards for the treatment of individuals and local
38 governments seeking financial assistance in future storm events; (4)
39 include recommendations for legislative and administrative changes
40 to assist the State in mitigating and responding to future storm
41 events; and (5) include any other information the DEP deems
42 necessary to mitigate the effects of future storms, fortify water and
43 wastewater infrastructure, and rebuild safer, more resilient
44 communities.

45 In October 2012, the post-tropical storm commonly referred to as
46 "Superstorm Sandy" struck New Jersey, producing unprecedented
47 severe weather conditions, including enormous storm surges,
48 devastating wind, and widespread flooding, crippling entire

1 communities across New Jersey, and inflicting incalculable harm to
2 the economy of the State. The storm damaged or destroyed more
3 than 72,000 homes and businesses in the State, drove more than a
4 quarter-million State residents to seek governmental assistance, and
5 resulted in more than \$36 billion in damage and recovery needs. In
6 addition, due to the time taken to distribute recovery aid following
7 Superstorm Sandy, many of those affected by the storm faced the
8 harsh reality of foreclosure on their home mortgages.

9 Recognizing that there are numerous challenges associated with
10 the efficient and expedient distribution of federal recovery
11 resources following a disaster of the scale of Superstorm Sandy, it
12 is appropriate for the State to look back on the actions taken in the
13 aftermath of the storm and evaluate the processes for individuals
14 and communities to obtain governmental assistance and expand
15 upon standards and safeguards for the treatment of individuals and
16 communities seeking financial assistance to recover from future
17 storm events. Given the severity of the damage caused by
18 Superstorm Sandy and the magnitude of the resources necessary for
19 the recovery process, there is a need to ensure that the State is better
20 prepared to face future challenges as similar storms are predicted to
21 occur due to climate change and changing weather patterns.