

# **Bost Bill Makes Disaster Relief Fairer For Rural Communities**

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Representative Mike Bost (IL-12) today introduced legislation to increase rural communities' access to emergency disaster relief. The Rural Disaster Declaration Fairness Act would require the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to consider disaster relief based on economic circumstances when considering a designation, rather than solely focusing on population numbers.

“FEMA’s current evaluation system for providing disaster relief is unfair to rural areas,” said Bost. “Small towns and farming communities shouldn’t be turned away for disaster relief they desperately need just because their population numbers are overshadowed by big cities and suburbs. My legislation will make sure rural residents, including right here in Southern Illinois, have improved access to relief following a natural disaster.”

Bost’s legislation would require FEMA to consider factors such as the local accessible tax base and local sales tax, the median income, and the poverty rate. It would also require states to provide a 10 percent, non-federal cost share for public assistance.