

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 8846

To improve tornado detection, forecasting, warning dissemination, and community resilience, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 15, 2026

Mr. BELL introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, and in addition to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To improve tornado detection, forecasting, warning dissemination, and community resilience, and for other purposes.

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 “Tornado Preparedness
5 Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

8 (1) Tornadoes and severe storms pose a per-
9 sistent and growing threat to communities across

1 the United States, particularly in high-risk regions
2 such as the Midwest and Southeast.

3 (2) In May 2025, a tornado in the St. Louis,
4 Missouri metropolitan region resulted in significant
5 damage and exposed critical failures in local emer-
6 gency warning systems, including failures in siren
7 activation and delays in public notification.

8 (3) A subsequent public report on the May
9 2025 St. Louis tornado identified breakdowns in
10 emergency management coordination, unclear lines
11 of authority for alert activation, and insufficient re-
12 dundancy in warning systems.

13 (4) Recent tornado events across the United
14 States have resulted in loss of life, destruction of
15 homes and infrastructure, and long-term economic
16 disruption.

17 (5) Advances in forecasting and detection tech-
18 nologies have improved warning capabilities, but
19 gaps remain in providing timely, localized, and ac-
20 tionable alerts to the public.

21 (6) Many communities, including low-income
22 and underserved areas, lack adequate access to
23 storm shelters, resilient infrastructure, and reliable
24 warning systems.

1 (7) Improving coordination between Federal,
2 State, and local agencies is critical to ensuring effec-
3 tive tornado preparedness, warning dissemination,
4 and response.

5 **SEC. 3. NATIONAL TORNADO DETECTION AND WARNING IM-**
6 **PROVEMENT PLAN.**

7 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of NOAA, in
8 coordination with the Administrator of FEMA, shall es-
9 tablish a program to improve tornado detection, fore-
10 casting, and warning capabilities.

11 (b) PROGRAM ELEMENTS.—The program established
12 under subsection (a) shall include—

13 (1) investment in next-generation radar, sat-
14 ellite, and sensor technologies;

15 (2) development of advanced forecasting mod-
16 els, including the use of artificial intelligence and
17 machine learning;

18 (3) expansion of localized, impact-based warn-
19 ing systems;

20 (4) improvements to warning systems; and

21 (5) integration of Federal forecasting capabili-
22 ties into State and local emergency management sys-
23 tems.

1 **SEC. 4. COMMUNITY TORNADO RESILIENCE GRANT PRO-**
2 **GRAM.**

3 (a) **ESTABLISHMENT.**—The Administrator of FEMA
4 shall establish a program to award grants to State and
5 local emergency management agencies to support tornado
6 preparedness and resilience in high-risk areas.

7 (b) **ELIGIBLE USES.**—Grants awarded under this
8 section may be used for—

9 (1) construction or retrofitting of community
10 storm shelters, including shelters located in schools,
11 mobile home communities, and other high-risk loca-
12 tions;

13 (2) installation or modernization of warning
14 systems;

15 (3) deployment of backup power for warning
16 systems;

17 (4) development of local emergency prepared-
18 ness plans and public education initiatives; and

19 (5) other projects determined appropriate by
20 the Administrator to enhance tornado resilience.

21 (c) **PRIORITY.**—In awarding grants under this sec-
22 tion, the Administrator shall prioritize—

23 (1) communities with high tornado risk;

24 (2) underserved and low-income communities;

25 and

1 (3) communities with limited access to existing
2 warning systems or shelters.

3 **SEC. 5. INTERAGENCY COORDINATION.**

4 The Administrator of NOAA and the Administrator
5 of the Federal Emergency Management Agency shall co-
6 ordinate with State, local, Tribal, and territorial govern-
7 ments to improve tornado preparedness and response, in-
8 cluding by—

9 (1) data sharing and integration of forecasting
10 systems;

11 (2) joint planning for emergency response; and

12 (3) support for public education and outreach
13 campaigns.

14 **SEC. 6. REPORT TO CONGRESS.**

15 (a) IN GENERAL.—Upon implementation of this Act,
16 the Administrator of NOAA, in coordination with the Ad-
17 ministrator of FEMA, shall submit to the appropriate con-
18 gressional committees a report on such implementation.

19 (b) CONTENTS.—The report required under sub-
20 section (a) shall include a description of—

21 (1) any improvements in tornado detection and
22 forecasting capabilities;

23 (2) the status of upgrades to warning systems;

1 (3) grants awarded under section 4, and how
2 such grants have been used to support tornado pre-
3 paredness and resilience;

4 (4) any remaining gaps in tornado preparedness
5 and resilience; and

6 (5) any recommendations for further legislative
7 or administrative action.

8 **SEC. 7. DEFINITIONS.**

9 In this Act:

10 (1) **APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMIT-**
11 **TEES.**—The term “appropriate congressional com-
12 mittees” means—

13 (A) the Committees on Transportation and
14 Infrastructure, Science, Space, and Technology,
15 and Appropriations of the House of Representa-
16 tives; and

17 (B) the Committees on Homeland Security
18 and Governmental Affairs, Commerce, Science,
19 and Transportation, and Appropriations of the
20 Senate.

21 (2) **FEMA.**—The term “FEMA” means the
22 Federal Emergency Management Agency.

23 (3) **HIGH-RISK AREA.**—The term “high-risk
24 area” means a geographic area identified by the Ad-

1 administrator, in coordination with NOAA, as having
2 a high frequency or elevated risk of tornado activity.

3 (4) NOAA.—The term “NOAA” means the Na-
4 tional Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

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