

Planning for Animal Wellness (PAW) Act

- Creates a working group at the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to review best practices and current Federal guidance related to the sheltering and evacuation of pets throughout the emergency management process.
- The working group would consist of animal experts from academia, non-profits, the veterinarian field, and state and local government.
- The focus of the group would cover the needs of household pets, captive animals, and service animals in all stages of emergency management including preparedness, response, and recovery.
- If the working group determines that current best practices are insufficient, FEMA would be required to update its Federal guidance within 1.5 years of the bill's enactment into law.

The PAW Act builds upon the bipartisan *Providing Responsible Emergency Plans for Animals at Risk of Emerging Disasters (PREPARED) Act* (H.R. 1442) Rep. Titus introduced along with Rep. Rodney Davis (R-IL) in 2021. The PREPARED Act would require entities regulated under the Animal Welfare Act – such as zoos, commercial animal dealers, and research facilities – to have contingency plans in place to safely evacuate and care for animals in an emergency or disaster situation. The bill currently has 156 bipartisan cosponsors.