

Section-by-Section Summary:

National Coordination on Adaptation and Resilience for Security (NCARS) Act of 2026

Section 1. Short Title

This section designates the Act as the “National Coordination on Resilience for Security Act of 2026.”

Section 2. Coordination on Resilience

This section forms the legislation and establishes the federal governance structure, responsibilities, planning requirements, and accountability mechanisms for developing and implementing a long-term, science-based national resilience strategy. It creates new federal leadership roles and processes to coordinate across agencies and with non-federal partners, including states, localities, tribal governments, territories, and the private sector.

Subsection (a) – Chief Resilience Officer (CRO)

This subsection directs the President to designate a Chief Resilience Officer (CRO) within the National Security Council (NSC). This individual is tasked with leading a government-wide effort – in collaboration with federal agencies, states, and localities – to build resilience against natural hazards.

Subsection (b) – CRO Duties

Specifically, the CRO is charged with four key duties:

1. Coordinating federal efforts to build resilience, based on the best available science.
2. Enhancing resilience at domestic and international U.S. military installations, recognizing the national security stakes of climate-related disruptions.
3. Auditing current federal investments to assess whether they promote resilience or exacerbate risk.
4. Improving federal spending efficiency, identifying areas of duplication, waste, or misalignment.

Subsection (c) – Interagency Working Groups

To carry out this Act, the CRO must establish interagency working groups, composed of agencies from across the federal government. The purpose of the working groups is to facilitate cross-agency coordination and to develop and implement the strategy across government.

Subsection (d) – Partners Council on Resilience

This subsection creates the Partners Council on Resilience, a federally appointed advisory body that serves as a formal bridge between federal agencies and non-federal partners. The council is intended to improve how the federal government supports resilience efforts outside Washington, particularly in rural, underserved, and vulnerable communities.

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- The council is composed of up to 24 members, not including the CRO.
 - The council shall include 20 non-federal members, including 12 members drawn from state, local, tribal, territorial, and eight private sector entities with on-the-ground experience managing risk and implementing resilience efforts.
 - Members shall serve a single term of not more than three years, unless the CRO extends a member's term by not more than one year.
- The CRO chairs the council and is responsible for appointing members and a vice chair, who will serve as the chair in the absence of the CRO.
- The Council is comprised of a broad range of geographic, political, organizational representatives. It also will prioritize incorporating members with lived experience of vulnerability to climate impacts or disasters.
- Every three years, the Partner's Council must issue a report to the President and Congress that:
 - Identifies gaps in federal support that make it more difficult for non-Federal partners to respond to natural hazards;
 - Assesses funding needs and resources that can help non-Federal partners adapt to natural hazards;
 - Offers policy and programmatic recommendations to improve federal coordination and support for non-Federal partners.

Subsection (e)(1) – National Resilience Strategy

This subsection requires the CRO and working groups to develop and periodically update a federal National Resilience Strategy. The Strategy is intended to serve as a unifying plan of action for the federal government to reduce the nation's vulnerability to natural hazards.

- The initial Strategy must be delivered to Congress and the President within two years of enactment, with updates required every three years.
- The Strategy must include:
 - Proactive, forward-looking planning – across the agencies represented in the interagency working group – that anticipates environmental shifts and mitigates their impacts before disaster strikes.
 - A focus on resilience of military installations, critical infrastructure, and supporting communities vulnerable to natural hazards.
 - A systematic review of inefficiencies in current federal resilience planning, funding, programs, and other investments.

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- An emphasis on ecosystem resilience, recognizing the interdependence of environmental and human systems.
- Strategies to promote resilience essential for national security, both at home and abroad.
- Plans to improve the resiliency of State, local, territorial, and tribal governments.
- The strategy must also include several technical components:
 - Guidance and best practices for agencies on how to work with non-Federal partners, especially rural and under-resourced communities, to better implement federal resilience programs and access Federal resources, including streamlined planning, application, and permitting processes.
 - A framework for developing improved metrics and indicators to measure the resilience of communities and systems to natural hazards, set baselines and targets for improving resilience in accordance with the Strategy, and track the efficacy of resilience programs, investments and other expenditures.
 - A systematic review of current federal resilience funding, programs, and other investments , including:
 - A summary of Federal funding available for resilience efforts, as well as disparities in the supply and demand for resilience funding;
 - how to better allocate funding to ensure it is reaching non-federal partners with the greatest level of vulnerability;
 - Outdated or inappropriate cost-benefit methodologies that may disadvantage resilience-focused projects;
 - Recommendations for how to better account for pre-disaster mitigation, natural infrastructure, and climate migration in funding formulas.

Subsection (e)(2) – Implementation Plan

Each iteration of the strategy must be accompanied by an Implementation Plan, which outlines how federal agencies – represented in the interagency working group – will act on the strategy and coordinate among themselves and with partners.

The Implementation Plan must:

- Clearly assign responsibilities to individual agencies;
- Set out plans for interagency agreements and external partnerships;

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- Describe how recommendations from the Partners Council will be integrated into implementation plans;
- Explain how the Clearinghouse (established in subsection (f)) will be used to improve information sharing and coordination;
- Address inconsistencies in existing priorities, goals, and procedures across agencies that currently undermine cohesive national resilience efforts.
- The plan must also identify and eliminate overlaps in federal programs, while encouraging greater collaboration, both horizontally across agencies and vertically between federal and local governments.

Subsection (e)(3) – Assessment and Oversight

To ensure accountability, the Comptroller General of the United States (GAO) is required to submit a comprehensive performance assessment every two years following the release of each Strategy and Implementation Plan.

Each GAO report must:

- Assess whether federal agencies are implementing the Strategy as planned;
- Evaluate the effectiveness of federal actions;
- Recommend additional steps to strengthen the federal government’s whole-of-government resilience posture.

Subsection (e)(4) – Public Comment

This subsection requires the CRO to publish draft and final versions of the Strategy and Implementation Plan in the Federal Register and to solicit public comments for 60 days. This process promotes transparency, public participation, and buy-in from communities and stakeholders nationwide.

Subsection (f) – Adaptation and Resilience Clearinghouse

This subsection mandates the creation of a centralized federal Clearinghouse within one year of enactment to streamline public access to adaptation and resilience information.

- This database aggregate will consolidate:
 - Data, projections, and technical tools;
 - Grant opportunities and best practices;
 - Agency programs and community support mechanisms;
 - Localized and downscaled information to support community-level planning.

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- The clearinghouse will also provide technical assistance, help communities identify appropriate tools, and standardize adaptation information to enhance planning at the national, regional, and local scales.

Subsection (g) – Sunset Clause

The Act includes a sunset provision, under which its authorities will expire on the earlier of:

- The submission of the third GAO assessment report, or
- 10 years after the enactment of this Ac.

Subsection (h) – Definitions

This subsection defines key terms, such as:

- “Natural Hazard” which is defined broadly to include precipitation, desertification, biodiversity loss, wildfire, and other natural threats, as well as the changing risk from those threats over time. The bill takes an expansive view of what constitutes a hazard, emphasizing that risk is evolving and multifaceted.
- “Resilience” is framed as the ability to recover from disasters, as well as proactive mitigation and minimization of harm, especially where failure to act would jeopardize national security.