

To the office of U.S. Representative John Garamendi

Re: HR 8653 (119th Congress), ADAPT Assets Act • Latest action (2026-05-04): Referred to the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.
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Targeted Resilient Transport Demo Grants Act

The measure, as described from the official record: Enhance resilience of critical transportation infrastructure to natural hazards like floods, wildfires, and hurricanes through targeted demonstration projects.

THE PROPOSAL

The Secretary of Transportation shall create a competitive grant program for up to 20 demonstration projects that test and prove technologies or methods to protect critical interstate highways, bridges, rail lines, and airports from natural hazards such as floods, hurricanes, earthquakes, and wildfires. Eligible applicants are state DOTs, tribal governments, or public-private partnerships with at least 20% matching funds from non-federal sources. Projects must focus on interstate commerce corridors, measure outcomes like reduced downtime or repair costs, and share results publicly within 6 months of completion.

Grants prioritize high-risk areas identified by FEMA hazard maps and require projects to use American-made materials where possible. No single grant exceeds \$25 million, and total awards cannot surpass the funding cap. The Secretary must publish selection criteria, including cost-benefit analysis, and deny funds to applicants with past grant mismanagement.

Annual progress reports go to Congress, detailing project status, spending, and resilience gains. Successful demos become models for state adoption, with no mandate on states. The program ends after the sunset period unless reauthorized.

OPERATIVE PROVISIONS (VFA PROPOSAL)

Funding Source	Highway Trust Fund
Funding Amount	\$500 million cap over program life
Sunset Years	5 years
Oversight Body	DOT Inspector General with annual GAO audits
Enforcement Mechanism	Clawback of unspent or mismanaged funds plus debarment from future grants; Congress reviews via annual report
Effective Date	October 1 following enactment

CONSTITUTIONAL BASIS

- Article I, Section 8, Clause 1
- Article I, Section 8, Clause 3
- Article I, Section 8, Clause 7

- Article I, Section 8, Clause 18

Concerns with the measure as written:

- Lacks funding cap, sunset provision, and strict oversight, risking open-ended federal spending beyond strict Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 general welfare limits.

WHY BOTH SIDES CAN BACK IT (VFA'S ASSESSMENT)

Honors Democratic priorities of climate adaptation and infrastructure equity in vulnerable areas; honors Republican priorities of fiscal caps, state matching funds, Buy American rules, and temporary program with strict audits to prevent waste.

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