

THE FLORIDA SENATE
2023-B SUMMARY OF LEGISLATION PASSED
Committee on Fiscal Policy

SB 2-B — Emergency Response

by Senator Albritton

The bill provides for emergency relief in the wake of the 2022 hurricane season, in which two disastrous hurricanes struck the state of Florida, resulting in widespread destruction of homes, infrastructure, agricultural lands, beaches, and more.

On September 28, 2022, Hurricane Ian made landfall in southwest Florida as a high-end Category 4 storm which brought heavy rainfall, deadly storm surge, and extensive wind damage to Florida. Just two months later, Hurricane Nicole made landfall on Florida's east coast causing residential damage, flooding, and shoreline erosion on coastal communities and exacerbated the impacts of Hurricane Ian.

The bill creates the Local Government Emergency Bridge Loan Program within the Department of Economic Opportunity to provide financial assistance to local governments that show losses in revenues due to the impacts of Hurricane Ian or Hurricane Nicole. Loan funds may only be used for operational expenses, not fixed capital outlay, and are interest-free for up to 1 year, which may be extended up to 6 months based on ongoing financial hardship. The bill appropriates \$50 million in nonrecurring funds from the General Revenue Fund for the program. The program expires on June 30, 2027.

The bill transfers \$650 million to the Emergency Preparedness and Response Fund to be used for responding to a declared state of emergency.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions take effect upon becoming a law.

Vote: Senate 39-0; House 106-0