



COMMITTEE ON
EDUCATION & LABOR
REPUBLICANS

COMMITTEE
STATEMENT

**Opening Statement of Rep. Rick Allen (R-GA), Republican Leader
Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education
Hearing:**

**“This is Not a Drill: Education-Related Response and Recovery in the Wake of
Natural Disasters”**

June 5, 2019

“We sometimes forget, that when a natural disaster strikes an area, it doesn’t discriminate what it destroys in its path. Schools are central gathering places and they are just as vulnerable as homes, businesses, and churches when a natural disaster hits our communities. Hurricanes and fires, like the ones that have devastated the U.S. in recent years, demolished school buildings and displaced thousands of students, forcing communities to scramble to rebuild.

When Congress provides disaster aid, making sure that this funding is used well is critical to the successful and efficient renewal of America’s destroyed schools. The Department must also assure it will support technical assistance, regulatory flexibility, and other measures, that allow state and local leaders the resources necessary to rebuild after a natural disaster and serve students in their communities.

There are no better witnesses to ask about the struggles of rebuilding schools after natural disasters than local and state education leaders. They are best suited to brief Congress on the challenges that come with reconstruction and the successes and areas for improvement in the Department of Education’s support of disaster relief efforts.

I look forward to this hearing and to working with all my colleagues to ensure that schools are not forgotten in the aftermath of natural disasters. We can’t always fully prepare for a destructive storm or fire, but we should be doing all we can to make the returning of America’s children to school as seamless as possible.”

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