

Deadly tornadoes, severe thunderstorms, and flash floods have swept through Mississippi in February, March, and April resulting in eight deaths and causing widespread damage. The Mississippi Emergency Management Agency was called in for support and guidance to assist the local emergency management directors and the citizens in the affected counties. The destruction exceeded state and local resources and prompted Governor Ronnie Musgrove to seek federal assistance. The disaster declaration enables FEMA and MEMA to team up to help the affected citizens begin the long and costly journey to recovery.

Senate Bill 2290 was signed into law by the Governor on March 12, 2001. This bill authorizes use of the Disaster Assistance Trust Fund for providing individual and public assistance under a State of Emergency declared by the Governor. This would assist eligible individuals, local and state governments when damages are not sufficient to warrant federal assistance. Although this legislation authorizes creation of these new state disaster assistance programs, there were no appropriation measures enacted to fund them during the session.