



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Scranton Officials Hopeful as Federal BRIC Grant Program is Reinstated

SCRANTON, PA. – Scranton Mayor Paige G. Cagnetti and City officials cautiously celebrated the news this week that the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) will relaunch a canceled grant program that was a cornerstone of flood recovery efforts in Keyser Valley and North Scranton. FEMA now plans to reinstate the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) grant after the Trump administration’s cancellation of the program was successfully challenged in court.

“For years, we have been fighting for Scranton families who lost their homes in the September 2023 flood and were left in limbo through no fault of their own. These are families paying mortgages on homes they cannot live in, waiting for answers, and waiting for help,” Mayor Paige G. Cagnetti said. “From the very beginning, we supported these property owners in the Keyser Valley and North Scranton in applying for BRIC funding and anticipated that by June 2025, we could have the money in place. We had previously submitted a BRIC application for some of the same homes in 2021, but were unsuccessful. But in April 2025, the program was abruptly canceled.

“I thank Governor Josh Shapiro for standing shoulder-to-shoulder with us and fighting to bring this program back. This did not happen by accident. It happened because we refused to accept that these families would be forgotten or their problems pushed aside.

“I am also grateful to PEMA for continuing to help us track our application for BRIC and Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) funds. While FEMA’s announcement gives me renewed hope that we will be able to secure federal funding for these homeowners, we continue to explore alternatives to federal assistance,” Mayor Cagnetti said.

Scranton first learned in July 2024 that it was selected as one of 656 total projects for the 2023 BRIC grant cycle. The program, created by FEMA during President Trump’s first administration, was designed to provide investments to help communities better prepare for natural disasters.

Two of Scranton’s BRIC applications had cleared initial review at that time. The first, for \$2,717,213, provided funding for the acquisition and demolition of 18 properties and three vacant lots in the areas of Keyser Valley and North Scranton, which were the hardest hit by flash flooding on September 9, 2023. A second grant, for \$75,001, would have allowed the City to work on updating building codes related to flooding and other hazardous events.

Then, in April 2025 and near the beginning of President Trump’s second administration, FEMA announced it was cancelling the BRIC program, labeling it as “yet another example of a wasteful and ineffective FEMA program.”

In July 2025, 22 states including Pennsylvania sued the Trump administration seeking to have the program reinstated. A federal judge in Massachusetts ruled in December 2025 that the administration could not unilaterally cancel the BRIC program. FEMA’s announcement on March 18, 2026, came days ahead of a deadline to comply with the ruling.

“I’m frustrated that this critical program was canceled in the first place. There has always been bipartisan support for BRIC because it saves lives, reduces risk, and helps communities recover. Disaster experts and emergency responders nationwide called its cancellation a dereliction of duty, and they were absolutely right,” Mayor Cignetti said. “The program should never have been cut. This has been a frustrating and unnecessary waste of time for the American people and for municipal governments across the country that were doing the right thing to protect their residents, first responders, businesses, and infrastructure.

“And this is not just about the funding. It is about peace of mind for families who have lived with uncertainty for far too long. It is about helping them move forward after devastating loss. And it is about reducing danger for our police officers and firefighters, who should never be put in harm’s way responding to preventable disasters,” Cignetti concluded. “We kept fighting, stayed in contact with the families, and have been pursuing all options to support them. Today, we are hopefully one step closer to delivering the relief these families deserve.”

There is no information yet from FEMA on whether communities, including Scranton, will have their awards reinstated or if they need to reapply to be eligible for BRIC grant funds. FEMA is currently impacted by a partial federal government shutdown, and the City is actively pursuing answers and advocating for these dollars. Officials maintain contact with FEMA, PEMA, and federal legislators.

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ABOUT THE CITY OF SCRANTON: Incorporated in 1866, the City of Scranton has a population of approximately 76,000 residents and is the sixth-largest municipality in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Scranton City Hall is located at 340 N. Washington Ave., Scranton, PA 18503. Residents requiring services should visit www.scrantonpa.gov.

ABOUT MAYOR PAIGE G. COGNETTI: Paige G. Cignetti was sworn in as the 36th Mayor of Scranton in January 2020 and took her third Oath of Office in January 2026. Her administration is focused on public safety, driving economic growth, upgrading infrastructure, government transparency and efficiency, and improving residents’ overall quality of life.