I endorse the comments filed by the Amateur Radio Safety Foundation. Amateur radio provides a resilient infrastructure that acts to back up normal channels of communication when natural disasters strike. These communications serve the needs of the public and served agencies, for example health and welfare traffic from the affected area. Digital communications are very effective for sending this type of information.

The purposes of the amateur radio service include; “Continuation and extension of the amateur's proven ability to contribute to the advancement of the radio art”, “Encouragement and improvement of the amateur service through rules which provide for advancing skills in both the communication and technical phases of the art., and “Expansion of the existing reservoir within the amateur radio service of trained operators, technicians, and electronics experts.” Allowing a faster signaling rate will further these purposes by encouraging new methods through experimentation. Digital modes encourages existing amateurs to increase their skills and knowledge, as putting these modes into practice requires reading, understanding, and practical application.