

1 A RESOLUTION urging Governor Matthew Bevin to declare a State of Emergency
2 in Martin County, Kentucky, and to make emergency funds available to resolve the
3 county's water crisis.

4 WHEREAS, water is a fundamental human necessity, as each person requires at
5 least 20 liters of clean, safe water every day for drinking, cooking, and maintaining
6 healthy personal hygiene; and

7 WHEREAS, the Martin County Water District is responsible for providing a
8 reliable supply of clean water for the approximately 12,000 residents of Martin County,
9 but is currently in danger of total collapse as the physical infrastructure and the financial
10 condition of the district are in serious need of assistance; and

11 WHEREAS, much of the dilapidated and malfunctioning infrastructure spread
12 across the mountainous terrain of Martin County is at least 40 years old; and

13 WHEREAS, the Martin County Water District's aging and leaking infrastructure is
14 to blame for a water loss rate of nearly 60 percent each year, which is four times the
15 recommended maximum loss rate; and

16 WHEREAS, the Martin County Water District has been referred to by a member of
17 the Kentucky Public Service Commission as "the worst district in the state"; and

18 WHEREAS, the Martin County Water District has, on more than one occasion, shut
19 off the water supply to its residents for one week or longer in 2018; and

20 WHEREAS, the residents of Martin County have experienced numerous instances
21 of contaminated, discolored, or otherwise unclean tap water over a period of at least two
22 years; and

23 WHEREAS, when clean water from the Martin County Water District is either
24 unavailable or insufficient, the process of acquiring clean, potable water for daily use is
25 both time-consuming and costly; and

26 WHEREAS, due to a variety of factors, including a decrease in customers and an
27 increase in utility costs to repair failing infrastructure, the Martin County Water District

1 incurs monthly expenses that exceed revenues by 40 percent; and

2 WHEREAS, the Martin County Water District, as of November 2017, is carrying
3 \$831,000 in accounts payable debt that it is unable to pay; and

4 WHEREAS, the Martin County Water District currently operates on a cash-only
5 basis with all of its vendors, which makes purchasing expensive infrastructure
6 components nearly impossible; and

7 WHEREAS, the Martin County Water District's unsustainable financial condition
8 jeopardizes not only its ability to meet its payroll, power, and debt obligations, but also its
9 ability to make the long-overdue infrastructure repairs; and

10 WHEREAS, the Martin County Water District has requested a permanent water rate
11 increase of 49 percent for all of its customers, many of whom cannot afford such a
12 financial burden; and

13 WHEREAS, the Martin County Water District's financial condition is such that, if
14 unresolved, residents of Martin County will likely face additional extended periods of
15 time without clean water; and

16 WHEREAS, based on the severity of the physical infrastructure deficiencies and the
17 imminent financial collapse of the Martin County Water District, it is necessary for the
18 government of the Commonwealth of Kentucky to intercede in order to protect the health,
19 safety, and welfare of the residents of Martin County;

20 NOW, THEREFORE,

21 ***Be it resolved by the House of Representatives of the General Assembly of the***
22 ***Commonwealth of Kentucky:***

23 ➔Section 1. The House of Representatives urges Governor Matthew Bevin to
24 declare a State of Emergency in Martin County, Kentucky, as it relates to the chronic
25 shortage of safe and potable water.

26 ➔Section 2. The House of Representatives urges Governor Matthew Bevin to
27 make emergency funds available to improve the Martin County Water District's dire

1 financial and operational conditions in order to ensure that Martin County residents have
2 a steady, reliable supply of clean water in the future.

3 ➔Section 3. The Clerk of the House of Representatives shall send a copy of this
4 Resolution and notification of its adoption to Governor Matthew Bevin, 700 Capital
5 Avenue Suite 100, Frankfort, Kentucky 40601.