

112TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. RES. 182

Expressing the condolences of the United States to the victims of the devastating tornadoes that touched down in the South in April 2011, commending the resiliency of the people of the affected States, including the people of the States of Alabama, Tennessee, Mississippi, Georgia, Virginia, and North Carolina, and committing to stand by the people affected in the relief and recovery efforts.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 12, 2011

Mr. SESSIONS (for himself, Mr. SHELBY, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. CORKER, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. WICKER, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. BURR, and Mrs. HAGAN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to

RESOLUTION

Expressing the condolences of the United States to the victims of the devastating tornadoes that touched down in the South in April 2011, commending the resiliency of the people of the affected States, including the people of the States of Alabama, Tennessee, Mississippi, Georgia, Virginia, and North Carolina, and committing to stand by the people affected in the relief and recovery efforts.

Whereas during the month of April 2011, a historic series of powerful storms and tornadoes tracked across the South;

Whereas preliminary estimates of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration indicate that more than 600 tornadoes were produced by storms that occurred across the United States in April 2011;

Whereas preliminary estimates of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration indicate that 305 tornadoes were produced by storms that occurred across the South during the period of April 25 through 28, 2011;

Whereas the previous record number of tornadoes occurring during the month of April was 267 tornadoes, which was set in April 1974, and the previous record number of tornadoes during any month was 542 tornadoes, which was set in May 2003;

Whereas the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration estimates that there were at least 358 fatalities as a result of the storms and tornadoes in April 2011;

Whereas as of the date of approval of this resolution, the number of fatalities resulting from the devastating storms and tornadoes in the State of Alabama is approaching 250;

Whereas there were 38 fatalities resulting from the devastating storms and tornadoes in the State of Tennessee;

Whereas tornadoes in the State of Mississippi resulted in at least 35 fatalities, at least 163 injuries, and at least 2,500 damaged homes, of which approximately 1,000 were severely damaged or destroyed;

Whereas as of the date of approval of this resolution, the total number of fatalities in the State of Georgia is at least 15;

Whereas tornadoes and massive storms in the Commonwealth of Virginia resulted in at least 6 fatalities, destroyed

more than 160 homes, and caused damage to more than 800 homes and businesses;

Whereas a number of tornadoes touched down in the Virginia counties of Gloucester, Goochland, Halifax, Middlesex, Pulaski, Shenandoah, and Washington;

Whereas in April 2011, devastating storms and at least 30 tornadoes resulted in 24 fatalities in the State of North Carolina;

Whereas the Tuscaloosa-Birmingham tornado of April 27, 2011, which caused at least 65 fatalities and more than 1,000 injuries, had a maximum width of 1.5 miles and a track length of 80 miles;

Whereas Smithville, Mississippi, a town of fewer than 900, lost 15 of its citizens, as well as its post office, school, city hall, most of its churches, and almost every home;

Whereas an Enhanced Fujita category 5 (referred to in this preamble as an “EF5”) tornado is defined by the National Weather Service of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration as the rarest and most severe type of tornado, with sustained winds of greater than 200 miles per hour and that results in total destruction of well-built, structurally-sound buildings;

Whereas 3 of the 5 EF5 rated tornadoes recorded in the United States since 2000 occurred as part of the April 25 through 28, 2011 tornado outbreak in the States of Mississippi and Alabama;

Whereas the Washington County, Virginia tornado traveled approximately 14 miles and had a maximum path width of 2 miles;

Whereas the National Weather Service estimates that 40 tornadoes hit the State of Tennessee from April 27 through 28, 2011;

Whereas the National Weather Service has confirmed that a total of 15 tornadoes hit the State of Georgia throughout the period of April 25 through 28, 2011, including a powerful EF4 tornado which devastated the city of Ringgold, Georgia;

Whereas dozens of rural communities throughout the South, including in the States of Alabama, Mississippi, Georgia, Tennessee, Virginia, and North Carolina, have been decimated by the devastating storms and tornadoes of April 2011;

Whereas more than 500 homes were damaged or destroyed in the State of Tennessee as a result of the devastating storms and tornadoes;

Whereas the massive storms impacted cities and towns in the State of Alabama, including Arab, Berry, Birmingham, Concord, Eclectic, Forkland, Fultondale, Hackleburg, Phil Campbell, Pleasant Grove, Rainsville, and Tuscaloosa;

Whereas President Obama declared 10 counties in the State of Tennessee to be in a state of major disaster and approved the request made by Governor Haslam for Federal disaster assistance;

Whereas the tornado that swept from Monroe County, Mississippi into Marion County, Alabama and destroyed Smithville, Mississippi was—

(1) the sixth deadliest tornado ever recorded in the State of Mississippi;

(2) the first EF5 tornado recorded in the State of Mississippi since 1966; and

(3) the first EF5 tornado recorded in the United States since May 2008.

Whereas the massive storms and tornadoes caused widespread damage in the Georgian counties of Bartow, Catoosa, Cherokee, Coweta, Dade, Floyd, Gordon, Greene, Habersham, Harris, Heard, Lamar, Lumpkin, Meriwether, Monroe, Morgan, Newton, Pickens, Polk, Rabun, Spalding, Troup, Upson, Walker, and White;

Whereas the massive storms and tornadoes caused widespread damage in the North Carolina counties of Bertie, Bladen, Craven, Cumberland, Currituck, Greene, Halifax, Harnett, Hertford, Hoke, Johnston, Lee Onslow, Pitt, Robeson, Sampson, Tyrell, Wake, and Wilson;

Whereas the tornado that swept from Neshoba County, Mississippi to Noxubee County, Mississippi was just the second EF5 tornado recorded in the State of Mississippi since 1966;

Whereas April 27, 2011, marks the third highest number of tornado-related fatalities occurring in a single day since March 18, 1925, when a series of tornadoes caused 747 fatalities across 7 States;

Whereas as of the date of approval of this resolution, the total number of fatalities resulting from the devastating storms and tornadoes remains unknown;

Whereas the suffering and distress of thousands of people affected by the storms and tornadoes is ongoing, particularly for those who lost loved ones, homes, and livelihoods;

Whereas immediate humanitarian aid is critically needed in many of the devastated regions;

Whereas the local emergency responders, National Guard, and many ordinary citizens of the affected regions have risked their lives to save others;

Whereas throughout the crisis, doctors, nurses, and medical personnel in the affected regions worked expeditiously to ensure that hospitals, medical centers, and triage units provided needed care;

Whereas many faith-based organizations and other volunteer organizations and charities are supplying the victims of the storms and tornadoes with food, water, and shelter;

Whereas the Alabama, Tennessee, Mississippi, Georgia, Virginia, and North Carolina Emergency Management Agencies, the first responders in the affected communities, and countless volunteers immediately came to the aid of those affected by the storms;

Whereas the Governor of Alabama, Robert Bentley, the Governor of Tennessee, Bill Haslam, the Governor of Mississippi, Haley Barbour, the Governor of Georgia, Nathan Deal, the Governor of Virginia, Robert McDonnell, and the Governor of North Carolina, Beverly Perdue, reacted swiftly and with great leadership in the immediate aftermath of the destructive storms and tornadoes;

Whereas President Obama responded quickly and efficiently to approve the requests made by Governors Bentley, Haslam, Barbour, Deal, and Perdue for Federal disaster assistance;

Whereas in response to the declaration by the President of a major disaster, the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency has made federal disaster as-

sistance available for the State of Alabama and elsewhere in the South to assist in local recovery efforts; and

Whereas thousands of volunteers and government employees from across the United States have committed time and resources to help with recovery efforts: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) expresses the heartfelt condolences of the
3 Senate to the families and friends of those who lost
4 their lives, homes, and livelihoods in the tragic
5 storms and tornadoes of April 2011;

6 (2) commends the resiliency and courage of the
7 people of the affected States, including the people of
8 the States of Alabama, Tennessee, Mississippi, Geor-
9 gia, Virginia, and North Carolina;

10 (3) extends the wishes of the Senate for a full
11 recovery for all those who were injured in the storms
12 and tornadoes;

13 (4) extends the thanks of the Senate to the
14 forecasters, first responders, firefighters, law en-
15 forcement personnel, volunteers, and medical per-
16 sonnel who took quick action to provide warnings,
17 aid, and comfort to the victims of the storms and
18 tornadoes;

19 (5) commits to provide the necessary resources
20 and to stand by the people of the affected States, in-

1 including the people of the States of Alabama, Ten-
2 nessee, Mississippi, Georgia, Virginia, and North
3 Carolina, in the relief, recovery, and rebuilding ef-
4 forts; and

5 (6) stands with the people affected by the
6 storms and tornadoes, including the people of the
7 States of Alabama, Tennessee, Mississippi, Georgia,
8 Virginia, and North Carolina, as those people begin
9 the healing process following this terrible event.

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