

No. R-334. House concurrent resolution recognizing the spirit of Vermont Strong online, in music, and as a commemorative license plate.

(H.C.R.258)

Offered by: Representatives Courcelle of Rutland City, French of Shrewsbury, Acinapura of Brandon, Andrews of Rutland City, Aswad of Burlington, Bissonnette of Winooski, Bohi of Hartford, Brennan of Colchester, Burditt of West Rutland, Burke of Brattleboro, Canfield of Fair Haven, Corcoran of Bennington, Devereux of Mount Holly, Donaghy of Poultney, Eckhardt of Chittenden, Fagan of Rutland City, Helm of Fair Haven, Hooper of Montpelier, Howard of Cambridge, Kitzmiller of Montpelier, Lanpher of Vergennes, Malcolm of Pawlet, McNeil of Rutland Town, Peaslee of Guildhall, Potter of Clarendon, Russell of Rutland City and Shaw of Pittsford

Offered by: Senators Carris, Doyle, Flory, Hartwell, Kitchel, Mazza, Mullin and Westman

Whereas, because much of the immediate information on Tropical Storm Irene's Vermont impact was digitally conveyed, Eric Mallette and Lyz Tomsuden decided to create a positive online presence in order to counteract the discouraging publicity about the storm's devastation, and

Whereas, Lyz Tomsuden, a graphic designer, created an image for use as a Facebook identification photo featuring a black Vermont map silhouetted against a green background, and the two of them developed the slogan "I Am Vermont Strong," and

Whereas, within 24 hours of the image's appearance on Facebook, a request was received for a T-shirt bearing the image, and they felt obliged to offer a shirt expressing solidarity with our state, and

Whereas, the T-shirt requests soon multiplied into the thousands, causing the packaging operation to be transferred to the rented stage of the Paramount

Theatre and eventually to an organization specializing in this type of T-shirt distribution, and

Whereas, at the end of October 2011, \$60,000 in sales proceeds were donated to the Vermont Foodbank, and by December 2011, approximately 5,000 shirts had been sold in 18 countries, and the continuing proceeds will be given to the Vermont Foodbank and other organizations helping Vermonters in their times of need, and

Whereas, over 10,000 persons became fans of the “I Am Vermont Strong” Facebook page, and

Whereas, Proctor Marble Company, the holder of the Vermont trade name *Vermont Strong*, graciously did not object to the limited use of this name recognizing the important volunteer work that this new organization was performing for the residents of Vermont, and

Whereas, a group of third- and fourth-graders at Union Elementary School have written a song, *Vermont Strong*, with the lyrics “Life can be hard, When the weather turns wrong, But I am Vermont,” and

Whereas, Governor Peter Shumlin proposed that a Vermont Strong commemorative license plate be created, and the General Assembly has followed through with the enactment of S.249 allocating \$18.00 of the proceeds from each plate sold to the Vermont Disaster Relief Fund and \$2.00 to the Vermont Foodbank, and motorists are authorized to display the license on the front of their vehicles, now therefore be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly recognizes the spirit of Vermont Strong online, in music, and as a commemorative license plate, and be it further

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to Eric Mallette, Lyz Tomsuden, the Union Elementary School in Montpelier, and June Wilson at the Proctor Marble Company.