

No. R-297. Senate concurrent resolution honoring the public service work of Brattleboro radio station WTSA during Tropical Storm Irene.

(S.C.R.32)

By Senators Illuzzi, Galbraith and White,

By Representatives Burke of Brattleboro, Condon of Colchester, Deen of Westminster, Edwards of Brattleboro, Hebert of Vernon, Manwaring of Wilmington, Marek of Newfane, Moran of Wardsboro, Mrowicki of Putney, Olsen of Jamaica, Partridge of Windham, Stuart of Brattleboro and Trieber of Rockingham,

Whereas, as a primary information source for transmitting public safety alerts related to the Vermont Yankee nuclear power plant, Brattleboro radio station WTSA-1450 AM/96.7 FM has familiarity with procedures for comprehensive, responsible, and timely emergency broadcasting, and

Whereas, on Thursday, August 25, 2011, in response to ominous weather forecasts predicting the potential local impact of powerful Hurricane Irene, Brattleboro station news director, Tim Johnson, approached local public safety officials regarding how the broadcaster could best respond to the storm, and

Whereas, an integral element of the station's storm preparation was to record interviews with officials who discussed precautionary steps citizens should take and how to access needed resources, and

Whereas, at 6:00 a.m. on Sunday morning, August 28, 2011, with now downgraded but still extremely dangerous Tropical Storm Irene clearly heading for Vermont, Tim Johnson, using broadband Internet access, began a marathon broadcast originating from his Vernon home on news-talk WTSA-FM, featuring weather and public safety updates, as well as pertinent

excerpts from the prerecorded interviews, and he only left the air temporarily to travel to the WTSA studios when his home electricity failed, and

Whereas, Tim Johnson's 21st century coverage included on-air responses to e-mail inquiries and communications via the WTSA website, Facebook page, and Twitter account, as well as the airing of periodic reports on WTSA-AM's sports format broadcasts, and

Whereas, in the days, weeks, and months following the storm's devastation in Windham County, WTSA broadcast and digital media outlets continued to offer valuable post-storm informational support, and

Whereas, Kelli Corbeil, the local owner of WTSA, was fully committed to the extensive special coverage which displaced regular FM programming for an entire day, believing that serving the community during an emergency is the station's highest responsibility, *now therefore be it*

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly honors the public service work of Brattleboro radio station WTSA during Tropical Storm Irene, *and be it further*

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to Kelli Corbeil and Tim Johnson at WTSA Radio in Brattleboro.