

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 83

BY SENATORS WHITE, ALLAIN, APPEL, CHABERT, CORTEZ, DONAHUE, ERDEY,
FANNIN, HEWITT, LAMBERT, MIZELL, PERRY, TARVER,
THOMPSON AND WALSWORTH

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To urge and request that the federal funds received by Louisiana through the Community Development Block Grant–Disaster Recovery Program relative to damages caused by the flooding in the state during 2016 be subject to the same legislative oversight as the oversight required for the allocation and expenditure of federal funds received by Louisiana through the Community Development Block Grant–Disaster Recovery Program relative to damages caused by hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

WHEREAS, during the months of March and August 2016, the state of Louisiana suffered two separate flooding events, each of which devastated large portions of the state; and

WHEREAS, in March of last year the state was struck with a weather event beginning Tuesday, March 8th, and continuing off and on through Saturday, March 12th, bringing recorded rainfall amounts of twenty inches or more and resulting in extreme flash flooding, the closing of numerous roadways, and the evacuation of homes and businesses in many locations; and

WHEREAS, the official airport reporting station in Monroe had picked up in excess of twenty inches of rain from March 8th through March 11th; and

WHEREAS, major flooding also swamped the Shreveport area, where up to eighteen inches of rain fell; and

WHEREAS, flooding from the March event prompted evacuations in Greenwood, Haughton, Homer, Minden, and Rayville, Louisiana, and resulted in record crests on Bayou Dorcheat at Lake Bistineau, Bogue Chitto River near Bush, Bogue Falaya River in Covington, Little River of Louisiana near Rochelle, and Tchefuncte River near Folsom and close-to-record crests on the Amite River at Bayou Manchac Point, Amite River at Port Vincent, Bayou D'Arbonne at Lake D'Arbonne, Big Cypress Creek at Mooringsport, Bogue

Chitto River at Franklinton, Calcasieu River near Glenmora, Calcasieu River near Oberlin, Pearl River near Pearl River, Red River at Shreveport, Sabine River at Logansport, Tangipahoa River at Robert, Tchefuncte River near Covington, and Tickfaw River at Liverpool, among others; and

WHEREAS, the August flood, which was described as the worst natural disaster in the United States since Hurricane Sandy in 2012, damaged hundreds of thousands of homes in the state and forced thousands of citizens into emergency shelters; and

WHEREAS, the August event started with a slow-moving low pressure weather system passing through the state producing unprecedented rainfall and leaving as much as two feet of rain in a twenty-four hour period in portions of the parishes of East Baton Rouge, Livingston, and St. Helena; and

WHEREAS, further rain that followed affected the parishes of Tangipahoa, East Feliciana, Washington, Ascension, Lafayette, Iberville, and St. Martin; and

WHEREAS, many affected by the rising waters in the August event had to be rescued by boat or helicopter, resulting in the formation of the famed "Cajun Navy"; and

WHEREAS, the education of thousands of school children in the areas affected by the flooding was adversely impacted; and

WHEREAS, the task of restoring and rebuilding in the affected areas is massive and complex; and

WHEREAS, despite the efforts of the state to obtain funding from the federal government to assist in the rebuilding process, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's disaster recovery funding, the Community Development Block Grant–Disaster Recovery Program, has thus far provided only a fraction of the funding needed by citizens for restoration and rebuilding of their homes, businesses, and lives; and

WHEREAS, it is an essential function of the legislature to monitor the use of these funds as they are spent to rebuild and restore the state, as was done in the years following hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana take the necessary steps to ensure that federal funds received by Louisiana through the Community Development Block Grant–Disaster Recovery Program relative to damages caused by

flooding in the state during 2016 be subject to the same legislative oversight as the oversight required for the allocation and expenditure of federal funds received by Louisiana through the Community Development Block Grant–Disaster Recovery Program relative to damages caused by hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to Governor John Bel Edwards and to the executive director of the Louisiana Office of Community Development–Disaster Recovery Unit.

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES