



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 1161

Resolution expressing solidarity and support for the people of California in the wake of the State's recent wildfires and urging President George W. Bush and the United States government to immediately provide the necessary resources to combat the lingering negative effects of the wildfires, including the possible threat of floods, mudflows and landslides.

By Council Members Koppell, Barron, Clarke, Gerson, Lopez, Perkins, Recchia and Sanders

Whereas, The people of the State of California expressed their solidarity and support for the people of New York after the terrorists attacks of September 11, 2001; and
Whereas, Recently, the worst wildfires in at least a decade raged across Southern California causing widespread devastation in the five counties of Los Angeles, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego and Ventura; and
Whereas, The Office of California Governor Gray Davis has reported that the recent Southern California wildfires killed 23 people, destroyed approximately 4,810 buildings, including 3,626 residences, and ruined approximately 738,158 acres of land; and
Whereas, According to published news reports, the Southern California wildfires also injured at least 183 people, forced an estimated 100,000 people to flee their homes and took more than 15,000 firefighters to battle the blazes that raged through the five affected counties; and
Whereas, Governor Gray Davis has indicated that the damage caused by the Southern California wildfires so far has been estimated at approximately \$2 billion, a figure that will most likely increase; and
Whereas, At the request of Governor Gray Davis, President George W. Bush declared the five counties affected by the Southern California wildfires a federal disaster area, making them eligible for federal disaster assistance and relief; and
Whereas, President Bush's disaster declaration enables the United States Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency ("FEMA") and other federal agencies to team up with the Governor's Office of Emergency Services to help residents and business owners in the affected counties recover from the effects of the wildfires; and
Whereas, Since President Bush's disaster declaration, more than 13,000 people have registered with FEMA for aid, with more than \$30 million in federal and state assistance approved, including \$3 million in housing assistance, \$6.3 million in medical, dental, funeral, transportation, moving and storage expenses and more than \$21.7 million in low-interest loans through the Small Business Administration for homeowners, renters and businesses; and
Whereas, Although most of the Southern California wildfires have been contained, according to FEMA and the Governor's Office of Emergency Services, residents within the five affected counties may now face the threat of floods, mudflows and landslides due to the oncoming rain season and the fact that the wildfires destroyed a lot of the vegetation that would have absorbed the rain; now, therefore, be it Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York expresses solidarity and support for the people of California in the wake of the State's recent wildfires and urges President George W. Bush and the United States government to immediately provide the necessary resources to combat the lingering negative effects of the wildfires, including the possible threat of floods, mudflows and landslides.

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