

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 89

BY SENATORS MILLIGAN, BOUDREAUX, CATHEY, FOIL, REESE AND TARVER

A RESOLUTION

To commend the Louisiana National Guard on its exemplary service to the state during the last two years in an unprecedented time of natural disasters.

WHEREAS, during these tumultuous years, the Louisiana National Guard has performed exemplary work and displayed tremendous dedication through its efforts to protect the lives and welfare of Louisianians; and

WHEREAS, the Louisiana National Guard fulfills its federal and state missions in concert with a wide variety of statewide organizations; and

WHEREAS, by air, by land, and by water, the Louisiana National Guard knows what to do in any emergency and it all begins with working as a team; and

WHEREAS, the Louisiana National Guard has supported the response to the pandemic since COVID-19's first known case in March 2020; and

WHEREAS, more than nine hundred soldiers and airmen of the Louisiana National Guard remain activated in response to COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, due to the efforts of the Guard, more than four hundred ninety-seven three hundred fifty-two individuals were tested at twenty-three test sites statewide, two million three hundred forty-one thousand seven hundred ninety-five food boxes were distributed, sixty-one million nine hundred thousand items of personal protective equipment (PPE) were delivered, and one hundred ninety thousand two hundred ninety-eight shots were administered; and

WHEREAS, through five waves of the pandemic, the soldiers and airmen of the Louisiana National Guard have developed new skills that have better prepared the Louisiana National Guard for future pandemics; and

WHEREAS, the Louisiana National Guard stretched itself in every direction, supporting all missions including food and water distribution, transportation,

communication, public works, engineering, emergency management, mass care, emergency assistance, logistics management, COVID-19 testing, public safety, security, traffic control, generators, power supply, and food bank operations; and

WHEREAS, Hurricane Laura came ashore in south Louisiana August 27, 2020, as a Category 4, causing catastrophic flooding and damage; and

WHEREAS, more than six thousand two hundred Louisiana National Guard members were deployed, using two hundred thirty-six high water vehicles, seventy-six boats, and seventeen helicopters to support hurricane rescue efforts, in addition to over a dozen engineering teams trained to help move debris and clear roads; and

WHEREAS, the Guard helped evacuate more than three hundred fifty-eight people and twenty-nine pets from affected areas; and

WHEREAS, after Hurricane Laura, the Louisiana National Guard distributed more than five million meals ready-to-eat, over seven million liters of water, more than one million bags of ice, and nearly two hundred thousand tarps to victims of the storm; and

WHEREAS, Hurricane Ida came ashore in south Louisiana August 29, 2021, as a Category 4 storm with sustained winds of 150 mph and heavy rainfall, causing catastrophic flooding and damage; and

WHEREAS, the Louisiana National Guard conducted search and rescue sweeps across thirty-one parishes, rescuing more than three hundred ninety-seven people and sixty-five pets by the Wednesday after the hurricane and clearing four hundred and three miles of routes clogged with debris; and

WHEREAS, the Louisiana National Guard distributed almost seven million MREs and almost eight million liters of water, over one million three hundred thousand bags of ice, over three hundred thousand tarps, and over four hundred generators; and

WHEREAS, Guardsmen opened seventeen locations to distribute food and water to people in need in nine parishes, with plans to operate forty; and

WHEREAS, another four hundred guard members were assisting law enforcement with security in New Orleans and six parishes; and

WHEREAS, about four thousand three hundred members of the Louisiana National Guard were assisting with relief efforts; and

WHEREAS, more than one thousand two hundred members of the Louisiana National Guard helped clear roads and handled logistical support in response to the winter storm in 2021; and

WHEREAS, using four engineer assessment teams and four engineer work teams, the Louisiana National Guard assessed one hundred thirty-seven miles of road while clearing one hundred eleven miles of snow and debris from roads in three parishes; and

WHEREAS, the Louisiana National Guard also provided seven wreckers to help Louisiana State Police and state transportation officials clear Interstate 20, moving two hundred sixty disabled commercial vehicles; and

WHEREAS, the Guard also distributed over one million two hundred thousand one-liter bottles of water to people in parishes affected by the storm and over four hundred thousand gallons of bulk water to hospitals and other medical centers; and

WHEREAS, the Guard provided thirteen generators to six parishes to assist with water systems; and

WHEREAS, the Louisiana National Guard responded to flooding throughout the state following multiple days of steady rain beginning in May of 2021; and

WHEREAS, at the height of the response, the Louisiana National Guard had three hundred ninety-three Guard members activated to support various missions, including search and rescue, engineering, and aerial reconnaissance; and

WHEREAS, using as many as seventy-nine high-water vehicles and nineteen boats, Guardsmen rescued twenty-five people and two pets in Lake Charles; and

WHEREAS, engineer assessment teams worked with local and state officials to determine the specific needs of communities to combat rising flood waters, while teams in multiple locations installed three thousand three hundred fifty feet of Tiger Dam, as a series of water-filled tubes that create a barrier to mitigate flooding; and

WHEREAS, the Louisiana National Guard confronted a demanding series of events with multiple challenges and missions at home and abroad; and

WHEREAS, Guardsmen deployed overseas and to other states during the past few years responded to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and other emergencies and participated in several significant events; and

WHEREAS, the tireless professionalism of our soldiers and airmen in supporting the state's initial response to the COVID-19 crisis and responding to the devastation of several hurricanes, including but not limited to hurricanes Laura and Ida, demonstrate the immeasurable value of the men and women of the Louisiana National Guard; and

WHEREAS, the Louisiana National Guard continues to live up to its promise of "Always Ready, Always There".

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby commend the Louisiana National Guard on its exemplary service to the state during the last two years in an unprecedented time of natural disaster.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to Major General Keith Waddell of the Louisiana National Guard.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE