**A** **CONCURRENT RESOLUTION**

CALLING UPON THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL AND THE DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES, IN COORDINATION WITH THE GOVERNOR, TO IMMEDIATELY BEGIN DEVELOPING A CONTINGENCY PLAN IN THE EVENT THE OIL LEAKING FROM THE DEEPWATER HORIZON IN THE GULF OF MEXICO IS SWEPT BY CURRENTS UP THE SOUTHEASTERN SEABOARD; IN DEVELOPING THIS PLAN THEY SHOULD ASSESS THE ACTIONS BEING TAKEN TO COMBAT THIS CRISIS AND DETERMINE WHAT SOLUTIONS ARE SUCCESSFUL AND WHAT ARE NOT AND IDENTIFY THE BEST PRACTICES AVAILABLE TO ADDRESS THIS PROBLEM AND THE RESOURCES NECESSARY TO CARRY OUT THIS PLAN.

Whereas, on Tuesday, April 20, 2010, the Deepwater Horizon, an offshore oil rig, exploded and caught fire in the Gulf of Mexico below Louisiana, while finishing a well for British Petroleum, and two days later a second explosion later caused the rig to sink; and

Whereas, this tragic event not only took the lives of eleven crewmembers, but it also set in motion a devastating release of oil into the Gulf of Mexico; and

Whereas, estimates have varied considerably on the amount of oil flowing from the Deepwater Horizon drilling pipe, which is approximately 5,000 feet below the surface. The estimates range from 210,000 gallons (5,000 barrels) a day to the worst case scenario at 4,200,000 gallons (100,000 barrels) a day; and

Whereas, the size of the spill is expanding quickly, and in a matter of weeks this it is expected to eclipse the 1989 Exxon Valdez incident as the worst oil disaster in United States history; and

Whereas, the oil slick continues to spread, and concern is rapidly growing that the spill may be caught by the Loop Current below Louisiana which rounds the Florida Keys and merges with the Gulf Stream Current, which could then carry the oil up the east coast bringing this environmental and economic disaster to South Carolina; and

Whereas, the General Assembly recognizes the urgent need to be proactive and prepared for the possibility of the oil making its way to the 187 miles of South Carolina’s coastline and its estuaries and territorial waters; and

Whereas, the Department of Health and Environmental Control and the Department of Natural Resources have the expertise to evaluate the impact of such an occurrence to South Carolina’s coastal waters and, in coordination with the Office of the Governor, to study and assess the solutions available and resources needed to develop a contingency plan to address such an event. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the Senate, the House of Representatives concurring:

That the South Carolina General Assembly, by this resolution, calls upon the Department of Health and Environmental Control and the Department of Natural Resources, in coordination with the Governor, to immediately begin developing a contingency plan in the event the oil leaking from the Deepwater Horizon in the Gulf of Mexico is swept by currents up the southeastern seaboard. In developing this plan they should assess the actions being taken to combat this crisis and determine what solutions are successful and what are not and identify the best practices available to address this problem and the resources necessary to carry out this plan.

Be it further resolved that the Department of Health and Environmental Control and the Department of Natural Resources, in coordination with the Governor, should submit the contingency plan to the General Assembly upon completion for its consideration.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the Director of the Department of Health and Environmental Control, the Director of the Department of Natural Resources, and the Governor.

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