

Senators Brown, Garcia, Kuipers and Birkholz offered the following resolution:

Senate Resolution No. 80.

A resolution expressing the intent of the Michigan State Legislature to formulate and adopt, with our neighboring states and provinces, a Great Lakes States Homeland Security Compact.

Whereas, The 10th Amendment to the United States Constitution guarantees that each state is responsible for the health and welfare of its citizens and may call upon the federal government only when an incident overwhelms its capabilities; and

Whereas, The Stafford Act, 42 USC 5121, constitutes the statutory authority for most federal disaster response activities and confers on the governor of each state the authority to request federal assistance in responding to incidents beyond the response capacity of the state and local governments. In 1996, Congress enacted the Emergency Management Assistance Compact Act (EMAC), as a uniform interstate compact (PL 104-321) authorizing member states to provide assistance after disasters overwhelm a state's capacity to manage the consequences; and

Whereas, Our federal system of government has both strengths and weaknesses in responding to emergencies. While the federal government can mobilize resources that exceed the capacity of any individual state, experience shows that the federal government is too distant to respond as rapidly as events may require. As Hurricane Katrina demonstrated, the federal government may need 72 hours to marshal the national resources and reach the scene of the emergency; and

Whereas, While an individual state is positioned to react faster, our resources may be inadequate to cope with national security emergencies that are national in scope and impact. An initiative to create a regional emergency management system that strengthens state and local preparedness among the states with a common set of problems and issues would help bridge the gap between the speed that a state may react and the scale of resources that the federal government can deploy; and

Whereas, The conclusions of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) National Plan Review's Phase 2 Report, dated June 16, 2006, were that states and urban areas need to coordinate planning across jurisdictions and levels of government for issues such as evacuation, special needs populations, plans for continuity of operations, assuring a command structure, patient tracking, resource management, and both operational and public communications. While EMAC is a successful tool for states to respond to incidents on a regional basis, it is limited in that its role is to support responses rather than to help states become better prepared. Nor does it account for the specific needs, capabilities, and nuances of individual states; and

Whereas, A Regional Emergency Management Support System (REMSS) developed by self-selected states through interstate compacts would strengthen collaboration and coordination, improve emergency communications, create incentives for planning and planning excellence, strengthen regional planning capabilities, develop a common reference system, and be a supplement to existing EMAC activities; and

Whereas, Under this regional system, each REMSS would have a regional implementing entity (RIE) that would work with each signatory state and the regional office of the Department of Homeland Security to strengthen each state's capabilities in all facets of the emergency management cycle. The federal government, through its grant design and requirements, encourages structures and practices associated with effective regional efforts. For example, the DHS Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) grant program has previously allowed multiple local jurisdictions to pool some of their grant resources to establish a regionwide UASI effort; and

Whereas, Coordinated multistate efforts would allow member states to better leverage federal funding as an effective regional effort. Staffed by emergency management experts from each state and representatives from the federal government, each RIE would become the focal point for emergency response within its region. The RIEs would build baseline databases of resources available within each signatory state, coordinate interstate exercises, and work closely with first

responders and others during triggering events. When a triggering event occurred, the RIE would quickly identify and locate needed resources and provide them to the affected state. In a dangerous and unpredictable world, we must make use of existing state-level resources to maximize our ability to respond to regional homeland security emergencies; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate, That we express the intent of the Michigan State Legislature to formulate and adopt, with our neighboring states and provinces, a Great Lakes States Homeland Security Compact; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to Governor Granholm; the executive and legislative branches of Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York, Quebec, and Ontario; the President of the United States Senate; the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives; and the members of the Michigan congressional delegation, as an invitation to our neighboring states and provinces to engage in good faith negotiations to complete such a security compact.