

109TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. CON. RES. 74

Expressing the sense of Congress with respect to the urgency of providing adequate assistance to the Co-operative Republic of Guyana devastated by severe flooding as a result of torrential rains from late December 2004 to January 2005.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 17, 2005

Mr. MEEKS of New York (for himself, Ms. LEE, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. CROWLEY, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Mr. RANGEL, Ms. CARSON, and Mr. CONYERS) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on International Relations

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of Congress with respect to the urgency of providing adequate assistance to the Co-operative Republic of Guyana devastated by severe flooding as a result of torrential rains from late December 2004 to January 2005.

Whereas from late December 2004 to January 2005 torrential rains caused serious flooding in the Co-operative Republic of Guyana, especially in the country's capital, Georgetown, and other coastal towns;

Whereas the total rainfall reached 59 inches, which is the highest rainfall for a similar time period in Guyana since 1888, more than 100 years ago;

Whereas the Pan American Health Organization estimates that at least 19 people have lost their lives as a result of the floods;

Whereas as of February 8, 2005, the flooding directly affected 290,000 residents in Guyana, with as many as 92,000 persons having lost their homes and livelihoods, and 32,000 persons still awaiting assistance;

Whereas the number of cases related to waterborne diseases such as leptospirosis, tuberculosis, pneumonia, and dengue continues to rise;

Whereas the United Nations currently estimates that \$3,000,000 is needed for assistance for Guyana and is awaiting a formal damage assessment once the flood waters recede, that could significantly increase this figure;

Whereas the cost of providing emergency assistance to the region is much greater than Guyana can sustain by itself;

Whereas the United States Agency for International Development has provided over \$1,200,000 in assistance to Guyana for relief and recovery from the severe flooding;

Whereas the Guyanese community members and organizations as well as the Consulate and Embassy of Guyana in the United States worked together and organized their own relief effort organization, called Guyana Flood Relief, which raised \$35,500 and provided other much-needed resources to Guyana;

Whereas the United States Agency for International Development's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance is working closely with the Government of Guyana, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the Pan American Health Orga-

nization, and other nongovernmental organizations to provide a final assessment of the flood damage and extend aid to flood victims in Guyana;

Whereas the Alliance of Small Island States, a coalition of small island and low-lying coastal countries, including Guyana, is effectively securing sustainable development for such countries, which are some of the most vulnerable countries in the world to natural disasters;

Whereas the people of the United States, where an average of 100 people lose their lives in floods annually and with flood damage averaging more than \$2,000,000,000, can empathize with the people of Guyana as they begin the recovery process; and

Whereas Guyana will need significant assistance from the international community for both relief and reconstruction efforts: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*
2 *concurring), That Congress—*

3 (1) commends the people of Co-operative Re-
4 public of Guyana for their efforts to respond to the
5 devastation caused by the severe flooding as a result
6 of torrential rains from late December 2004 to Jan-
7 uary 2005;

8 (2) commends the efforts of Guyanese-Ameri-
9 cans and their organizations to provide relief to
10 those individuals who are suffering as result of the
11 flooding;

1 (3) commends the ongoing international relief
2 effort that includes the work of individual countries,
3 numerous international organizations, and various
4 relief and other nongovernmental organizations;

5 (4) supports the efforts of the United States
6 Government and its coordination with the inter-
7 national community and organizations to assess the
8 damage and provide assistance to the people of Guy-
9 ana;

10 (5) urges the international community to take
11 all necessary steps to provide emergency relief and
12 support reconstruction efforts for Guyana; and

13 (6) urges the President, acting through the Ad-
14 ministrator of the United States Agency for Inter-
15 national Development, to assess, anticipate, and pro-
16 vide further assistance to Guyana as needed to help
17 rebuild lives and restore livelihoods.

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