

1           A RESOLUTION urging Governor Andy Beshear to declare a State of Emergency  
2 in Martin County, Kentucky and to make emergency funds available to resolve the  
3 county's water crisis.

4           WHEREAS, water is a fundamental human necessity, as each person requires at  
5 least 20 liters of clean, safe water every day for drinking, cooking, and maintaining  
6 healthy personal hygiene; and

7           WHEREAS, the Martin County Water District is responsible for providing a  
8 reliable supply of clean water to the approximately 12,000 residents of Martin County,  
9 but is currently in danger of total collapse as the physical infrastructure and the financial  
10 condition of the district are in serious need of assistance; and

11           WHEREAS, much of the dilapidated and malfunctioning infrastructure that spreads  
12 across the mountainous terrain of Martin County is at least 40 years old; and

13           WHEREAS, the Martin County Water District's aging and leaking infrastructure  
14 was to blame for a water loss rate of approximately 70 percent in 2018, which is nearly  
15 five times the recommended maximum loss rate; and

16           WHEREAS, the Martin County Water District has been referred to by a member of  
17 the Kentucky Public Service Commission as "the worst district in the state"; and

18           WHEREAS, the Martin County Water District, on more than one occasion, shut off  
19 the water supply to its residents for one week or longer; and

20           WHEREAS, the Martin County Water District issued numerous boil advisories in  
21 multiple areas in 2019 due to damaged water lines across the county; and

22           WHEREAS, the residents of Martin County have experienced numerous instances  
23 of contaminated, discolored, or otherwise unclean tap water over a period of at least three  
24 years; and

25           WHEREAS, when clean water from the Martin County Water District is either  
26 unavailable or insufficient, the process of acquiring clean, potable water for daily use is  
27 both time-consuming and costly for residents; and

1           WHEREAS, due to a variety of factors including a decrease in customers and an  
2 increase in utility costs to repair failing infrastructure, the Martin County Water District  
3 consistently incurs monthly expenses that exceed revenues; and

4           WHEREAS, the Martin County Water District is carrying more than \$1 million in  
5 debt that it is unable to pay; and

6           WHEREAS, the Martin County Water District has at times, due to its financial  
7 condition, operated on a cash-only basis with its vendors, which makes purchasing  
8 expensive infrastructure components nearly impossible; and

9           WHEREAS, the Martin County Water District's unsustainable financial situation  
10 jeopardizes not only its ability to meet its payroll, power, and debt obligations, but also its  
11 ability to make the long overdue infrastructure repairs; and

12           WHEREAS, the Martin County Water District has requested and received multiple  
13 permanent water rate increases for all of its customers, many of whom cannot afford such  
14 a financial burden; and

15           WHEREAS, the average water bill for Martin County Water District customers has  
16 increased by approximately 44 percent since early 2018; and

17           WHEREAS, the Martin County Water District's financial condition is such that, if  
18 unresolved, residents of Martin County will likely face additional extended periods of  
19 time without clean water; and

20           WHEREAS, based on the severity of the physical infrastructure deficiencies and the  
21 imminent financial collapse of the Martin County Water District, it is necessary for the  
22 government of the Commonwealth of Kentucky to intercede in order to protect the health,  
23 safety, and welfare of the residents of Martin County;

24           NOW, THEREFORE,

25 ***Be it resolved by the House of Representatives of the General Assembly of the***  
26 ***Commonwealth of Kentucky:***

27           ➔Section 1. The House of Representatives urges Governor Andy Beshear to

1 declare a State of Emergency for Martin County, Kentucky as it relates to the chronic  
2 shortage of safe and potable water.

3       ➔Section 2. The House of Representatives urges Governor Andy Beshear to make  
4 emergency funds available to improve the Martin County Water District's dire financial  
5 and operational conditions to ensure that Martin County residents have a steady, reliable  
6 supply of clean water in the future.

7       ➔Section 3. The Clerk of the House of Representatives shall send a copy of this  
8 Resolution and notification of its adoption to Governor Andy Beshear, 700 Capital  
9 Avenue Suite 100, Frankfort, KY 40601.