

1 A RESOLUTION expressing sympathy to the citizens of the Commonwealth
2 affected by the historic December 2021 tornado outbreak and honoring the many acts of
3 kindness provided to the impacted communities and school districts by school personnel.

4 WHEREAS, on December 10 and 11, 2021, a historic tornado outbreak, including a
5 violent, 165.7-mile tornado, moved across Western Kentucky producing severe to
6 catastrophic damage in numerous communities, killing at least 77 Kentuckians, including
7 12 children and an infant, and leaving countless people in those communities injured and
8 without homes, jobs, or even minimal necessities; and

9 WHEREAS, the impact of the tornado outbreak was vast in Barren, Caldwell,
10 Christian, Fulton, Graves, Hart, Hickman, Hopkins, Logan, Lyon, Marion, Marshall,
11 Muhlenberg, Ohio, Taylor, and Warren counties; and

12 WHEREAS, immediately after the tornadoes touched down, school personnel,
13 without solicitation or regard for their own needs and situations, began to do what they do
14 best – provide support to their students, their families, and their communities; and

15 WHEREAS, school personnel almost instantly went door to door to check on
16 students and families and to get victims to safety and, at least in one instance, set up a
17 triage center in a school; and

18 WHEREAS, within hours after the tornadoes touched down, school personnel had
19 opened school facilities as temporary shelters and were helping with rescue efforts. They
20 rode to devastated homes to offer victims shelter on the buses or transportation to
21 temporary shelters; and

22 WHEREAS, there were countless examples of school personnel taking care of the
23 community, including a teacher staying at a hospital with a student injured in the storm
24 and a bus driver rescuing neighbors buried in the rubble; and

25 WHEREAS, as the hours and days went by in the aftermath of the storm, the
26 selfless actions by school personnel continued, including school cafeteria workers
27 providing hot meals, bus drivers delivering food and supplies to families, family resource

1 staff setting up daycares, and mental health professionals providing counseling for anyone
2 in need; and

3 WHEREAS, wherever school personnel and school families saw a need, they were
4 there to help, including gathering donations, setting up donation sites, and helping
5 families in need find new homes, appliances, and furnishings; and

6 WHEREAS, in the hours, days, and weeks that followed, school personnel and
7 others gave generously of time, money, and resources with far-reaching acts of kindness
8 coming from across the state, the nation, and the world, including search and rescue
9 efforts, providing shelter, and donating money and necessities; and

10 WHEREAS, within hours of the tragedy, financial donations started pouring into
11 the communities, and caravans of school buses, vans, trucks, and cars loaded with
12 supplies came from all regions of the state; and

13 WHEREAS, on December 20, the "Stuff the Bus" campaign culminated with a
14 caravan of 65 buses filled from top to bottom with supplies traveling from eastern
15 Kentucky to western Kentucky; and

16 WHEREAS, before Christmas, school districts supported numerous toy drives by
17 collecting toys, books, electronics, and gift cards to provide happiness and hope for the
18 children impacted by the storms. Prior to Christmas, and even through Christmas Eve,
19 staff of education cooperatives, school personnel, and other community volunteers
20 assisted with the toy and gift deliveries; and

21 WHEREAS, when schools reopened in the devastated communities, school districts
22 around the state donated or loaned school buses to the districts that suffered damage to or
23 lost their buses in the storm, helped transport students, and shared needed school
24 supplies; and

25 WHEREAS, amid the deep sadness and devastation, the statewide school family
26 pulled together to aid students and families, reaffirming the belief that the school system
27 is the heart and spirit of the community;

1 NOW, THEREFORE,

2 *Be it resolved by the Senate of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of*
3 *Kentucky:*

4 ➔Section 1. The Senate extends its utmost gratitude to the school personnel who
5 so selflessly and without solicitation assisted the citizens of the Commonwealth who
6 were impacted by the devastating tornadoes and who gave of their time and resources
7 alongside first responders, private agencies, churches, businesses, manufacturers,
8 organizations, and other individuals.

9 ➔Section 2. The Senate extends its heartfelt gratitude to the superintendents of
10 the school districts in the counties impacted by the tornadoes for their leadership
11 including: Patrice Chambers, Fulton County; DeAnna Miller, Fulton Independent; Casey
12 Henderson, Hickman County; Matthew Madding, Graves County; Joe Henderson,
13 Mayfield Independent; Steve Miracle, Marshall County; Jeremy Roach, Caldwell County;
14 Leonard Whalen, Dawson Springs Independent; Amy Michele Smith, Hopkins County;
15 Christopher Bentzel, Christian County; Robert Davis, Muhlenberg County; Seth
16 Southard, Ohio County; Paul M. Mullins, Logan County; Larry Begley, Russellville
17 Independent; Rob Clayton, Warren County; Gary Fields, Bowling Green Independent;
18 Nathan Smith, Hart County; Cornelius Faulkner, Caverna Independent; Keith Hale,
19 Glasgow Independent; Bo Matthews, Barren County; Charles Higdon Jr., Taylor County;
20 Kirby Smith, Campbellsville Independent; Boyd Randolph, Marion County; and Russ
21 Tilford, Lyon County.

22 ➔Section 3. The Clerk of the Senate is directed to transmit a copy of this
23 Resolution to Dr. Jim Flynn, Executive Director, Kentucky Association of School
24 Superintendents, 87 C Michael Davenport Boulevard, Frankfort, Kentucky 40601 and
25 Commissioner Jason Glass, Kentucky Department of Education, 300 Sower Boulevard,
26 5th Floor, Frankfort, Kentucky 40601.