

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION establishing the Disaster Prevention and
2 Resiliency Task Force to study disaster mitigation, risk assessment, infrastructure
3 resilience, and planning for natural disasters that impact the Commonwealth.

4 WHEREAS, the protection of human life and property is a fundamental
5 responsibility of the government of the Commonwealth of Kentucky; and

6 WHEREAS, the Commonwealth is susceptible to various natural and manmade
7 disaster events, posing threats to the well-being of its citizens, integrity of its
8 infrastructure, prospects for its economic growth, and maintenance and protection of its
9 unique lands and water areas and applicable natural resources. These threats additionally
10 pose significant fiscal and operational risks to functions of the Commonwealth's
11 government; and

12 WHEREAS, the Commonwealth has experienced an increase in the occurrence and
13 magnitude of natural disasters, including flooding and tornadoes, as a result of shifting
14 weather patterns. Between 2011 and 2023, Kentucky experienced 20 Major Disaster
15 Declarations, which is the sixth most in the United States in that timeframe. Nationally,
16 eight of ten counties with the highest number of Major Disaster Declarations between
17 2011 and 2023 were located in the Commonwealth of Kentucky; and

18 WHEREAS, catastrophic flooding in July 2022 impacted a wide swath of the
19 Commonwealth, leading to at least 44 deaths and nearly 9,000 homes damaged or
20 destroyed. Kentucky has experienced numerous episodes of catastrophic flooding
21 resulting from intense rain and storms. These events highlight the need for a statewide
22 plan to accommodate and mitigate flooding impacts in the Commonwealth, matching
23 states across the country which are increasingly responding to more frequent and extreme
24 weather events; and

25 WHEREAS, Kentucky is additionally susceptible to other extreme weather hazards,
26 such as landslides, wildfire, drought, and extreme heat. Atmospheric cycles combined
27 with changes in land use and other activities may further exacerbate these hazard risks in

1 the future; and

2 WHEREAS, the ability to execute timely and effective response and recovery
3 operations are essential when the Commonwealth experiences devastating natural
4 disasters. The Commonwealth will benefit from a coordinated and collaborative effort to
5 develop comprehensive responses and solutions to protect Kentucky and its citizens,
6 businesses, and natural resources emphasizing the need to assess current risks and
7 analyze projected future conditions; and

8 WHEREAS, understanding the effect of environmental disasters and the available
9 resources allocated for relief is essential for limiting the impact following such events. In
10 these endeavors, it is vital that this Commonwealth develop a comprehensive approach to
11 resilience to accommodate and mitigate current and future disaster events to lessen the
12 negative effects to Kentucky's economy and to facilitate economic development, promote
13 tourism, and assist communities and businesses struggling with repeated disaster impacts;
14 and

15 WHEREAS, preparedness efforts to prevent and mitigate natural disasters are
16 crucial to ensuring the safety and protection of the citizens of the Commonwealth in
17 future weather-related calamities. A coordinated Commonwealth, local, and community
18 effort is necessary and appropriate to facilitate the interaction and effective collaboration
19 between various government entities and the private and academic sectors to address
20 these issues; and

21 WHEREAS, the General Assembly wishes to assess needs, gaps, and opportunities
22 to increase disaster resilience throughout the entirety of the Commonwealth and
23 recommend policy measures to advance those desired outcomes; and

24 WHEREAS, the General Assembly seeks expert opinions and research from a
25 variety of reputable institutions and policymakers, including those representing county
26 and municipal governments, that can provide relevant and pertinent information
27 regarding approaches to affirmatively increase resilience across the Commonwealth in

1 the face of current and future risks attributed to extreme weather hazards;

2 NOW, THEREFORE,

3 *Be it resolved by the House of Representatives of the General Assembly of the*
4 *Commonwealth of Kentucky, the Senate concurring therein:*

5 ➔Section 1. The Legislative Research Commission shall establish the Disaster
6 Prevention and Resiliency Task Force, which shall:

7 (1) Study, review, and make recommendations regarding current and future
8 policy needs to address risk assessment, strategic planning, prevention of natural
9 disasters, response efforts, temporary housing, and relief strategies in the
10 Commonwealth;

11 (2) Evaluate approaches employed by other states with comparable population
12 and economic characteristics to deter and manage natural disasters and determine
13 effective governance, administration models, and policies that may be suitable for
14 adoption in the Commonwealth;

15 (3) Analyze fiscal aspects of various prevention, replacement, infrastructure, and
16 mitigation costs to identify cost-sharing opportunities and maximize the use of state and
17 federal funds allocated to disaster relief and mitigation;

18 (4) Analyze the role of the legislative and executive branches in preventing and
19 protecting against natural disasters as well as collaboration between federal, state, and
20 local governments and their respective agencies in relief and mitigation efforts;

21 (5) Review the functionality, duties, structure, independence, effectiveness, and
22 efficiency of various agencies, offices, and departments representing the Commonwealth
23 of Kentucky engaging in activities intended to increase resilience to current and future
24 disasters;

25 (6) Review publications, reports, and analyses of governances relating to
26 statewide disaster resilience and risk reduction activities;

27 (7) Hear testimony from entities with experience in research on and expertise in

1 structures, policies, and governance specific to statewide disaster resilience and risk
2 reduction activities; stormwater management and use; risks associated with drought,
3 wildfire, and extreme heat; urbanization impact; project and operational financing;
4 affordability; available grants; and appropriate partnerships;

5 (8) Hear testimony from individuals who have relevant professional, academic, or
6 research expertise, or who otherwise have significant experience in relevant areas,
7 including engineering, disaster mitigation and resilience, public planning, hydrology,
8 environmental protection, or climatology;

9 (9) Hear testimony from citizens from across the Commonwealth whose lives and
10 livelihoods have been affected by flooding, drought, fires, or other extreme weather
11 events;

12 (10) Assess available relevant data sources and identify data gaps relevant to
13 current and future multi-hazard risks, including but not limited to data describing
14 precipitation patterns, stream flows, and riverine and flash flood risk;

15 (11) Review relevant past efforts to build disaster resilience across the
16 Commonwealth, including but not limited to, activities and outcomes associated with the
17 Council for Community Recovery and Resilience (CCRR) created following catastrophic
18 2022 flooding in Eastern Kentucky;

19 (12) Review how other states have implemented or put in place state resilience
20 offices, chief resilience officers, and statewide resilience plans and assess whether these
21 models may be replicable in the Commonwealth of Kentucky;

22 (13) Assess the need for any other alternative governance structures, operations,
23 management, and policy models designed to advance disaster resilience and risk
24 reduction outcomes across the Commonwealth;

25 (14) Explore options for expanded Commonwealth-wide resilience functions and
26 their potential impact on:

27 (a) Federal, state, and local funding;

- 1 (b) Commonwealth-owned real property and facilities;
- 2 (c) Commonwealth-owned construction;
- 3 (d) Insurance availability and affordability;
- 4 (e) Transportation infrastructure;
- 5 (f) Critical infrastructure and key resources;
- 6 (g) Stormwater management and use;
- 7 (h) Urbanization;
- 8 (i) Economic development and opportunity;
- 9 (j) Out-migration and labor force;
- 10 (k) Affordable housing availability;
- 11 (l) Assessment and accountability;
- 12 (m) Personnel and tenure;
- 13 (n) Transition and startup timelines;
- 14 (o) Implementation costs;
- 15 (p) Compliance with existing state and federal laws; and
- 16 (q) Any other issue;

17 (15) Identify and recommend a framework for a comprehensive, executable
18 strategy for long-term disaster resilience and risk reduction and identify the stakeholders,
19 partners, and topics necessary to create a plan for long-term disaster resilience and risk
20 reduction; and

21 (16) Develop a report adopting specific findings and recommendations that include
22 suggestions for proposed legislation or administrative action, pursuant to the activities of
23 the Commonwealth Disaster Resilience and Risk Reduction Task Force prior to the date
24 of abolishment specified in this resolution.

25 ➔Section 2. The Disaster Prevention and Resiliency Task Force shall be
26 composed of the following members, with final membership of the task force being
27 subject to the consideration and approval of the Legislative Research Commission:

- 1 (1) (a) Two members of the House of Representatives to be appointed by the
2 Speaker of the House;
- 3 (b) Two members of the House of Representatives to be appointed by the
4 Minority Floor Leader of the House; and
- 5 (c) The Speaker of the House shall designate one of the four members appointed
6 from the House of Representatives to serve as co-chair of the task force;
- 7 (2) (a) Two members of the Senate to be appointed by the President of the
8 Senate;
- 9 (b) Two members of the Senate to be appointed by the Minority Floor Leader of
10 the Senate; and
- 11 (c) The President of the Senate shall designate one of the four members appointed
12 from the Senate to serve as co-chair of the task force;
- 13 (3) The director of the Division of Emergency Management or designee;
- 14 (4) The executive director of the Kentucky Office of Homeland Security or
15 designee;
- 16 (5) The director of the Division of Water or designee;
- 17 (6) The commissioner of the Department of Housing, Buildings and Construction
18 or designee;
- 19 (7) The commissioner of the Department of Insurance or designee;
- 20 (8) One member appointed by the Kentucky Association of Mitigation Managers;
- 21 (9) A representative from the National Association of Insurance Commissioners
22 or designee;
- 23 (10) The president of the Kentucky Association of Counties or designee;
- 24 (11) The president of the Kentucky League of Cities or designee;
- 25 (12) The president of a state university or the Kentucky Community and Technical
26 College System or designee, chosen by the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary
27 Education;

1 (13) One member with experience in the finance, management, and operations of
2 businesses that operate in the Commonwealth chosen by the Kentucky Chamber of
3 Commerce; and

4 (14) To be appointed by the Legislative Research Commission to ensure broad
5 political and geographical representation:

6 (a) Two county judges/executive or designees, with one representing one of
7 the 13 counties declared under the Major Disaster Declaration in conjunction with
8 catastrophic 2022 flooding in Eastern Kentucky, and with one representing a county with
9 past or potential impacts of similar events not included in the 13 counties declared under
10 the Major Disaster Declaration;

11 (b) Two mayors or designees, with one representing one of the 13 counties
12 declared under the Major Disaster Declaration in conjunction with catastrophic 2022
13 flooding in Eastern Kentucky, and with one representing a county with past or potential
14 impacts of similar events not included in the 13 counties declared under the Major
15 Disaster Declaration;

16 (c) A representative from a nonprofit organization that participates in
17 disaster relief efforts; and

18 (d) A citizen with competency, experience, and knowledge in the field of
19 engineering or hydrology.

20 ➔Section 3. The Disaster Prevention and Resiliency Task Force shall meet at
21 least monthly during the 2025 Interim of the General Assembly. The task force shall
22 submit findings and recommendations to the Legislative Research Commission for
23 referral to the appropriate committee or subcommittee thereof by December 1, 2025.

24 ➔Section 4. Provisions of this Resolution to the contrary notwithstanding, the
25 Legislative Research Commission shall have the authority to alternatively assign the
26 issues identified herein to an interim joint committee or subcommittee thereof, and to
27 designate a study completion date.