

**MOTION BY SUPERVISOR MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS**

**SEPTEMBER 5, 2017**

**Large-Scale Disaster and Emergency Readiness and Preparedness**

On August 25, 2017, Hurricane Harvey made landfall near Rockport, Texas as a Category 4 hurricane, and caused catastrophic inland flooding throughout the southeastern region of Texas and in other gulf states. Consequently, early estimates suggest that the region has suffered an estimated \$125 billion in property damage and, to date, at least 39 deaths. Hundreds of thousands of homes have been inundated by flooding, prompting over 13,000 rescues and the displacement of more than 30,000 people. This is a human tragedy and a time of great need for the people of southeast Texas and the Gulf states. The County of Los Angeles (County) wishes to extend its deepest sympathies and wishes for a safe and expedient recovery to the victims of Hurricane Harvey.

As a continuation of past efforts to respond to large-scale disasters around the world, the County is part of an international response unit currently assisting in Texas and at the request of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the County Fire Department sent two Urban Search and Rescue Teams, California Task Force-2 (CATF-2). CATF-2 is a Swiftwater rescue component deployed to assist with search

**MOTION**

Solis \_\_\_\_\_

Kuehl \_\_\_\_\_

Hahn \_\_\_\_\_

Barger \_\_\_\_\_

Ridley-Thomas \_\_\_\_\_

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and rescue efforts in areas affected by major flooding. These teams are expected to be deployed for five to six days. In addition, the County's Office of Emergency Management is in contact with the appropriate Federal authorities to receive and respond to possible additional requests for help.

In August 2005, following Hurricane Katrina's devastation in Louisiana, the Board acted swiftly and established a Task Force comprised of key County Departments to strategize and prepare to receive hundreds of displaced persons from those affected by the hurricane. While it is unclear whether a post-incident report was prepared, and it is also unknown whether the anticipated number of displaced persons actually arrived in the County and requested public services, to the extent possible, the County should once again prepare to receive displaced persons and families.

In addition to meeting the County's responsibility to help respond to large-scale disasters around the world, it is important that the County and its residents are prepared to respond to large-scale disasters and emergencies locally. A review of the County's level of readiness and the public's level of preparedness is necessary given the multiple County departments and agencies involved, in addition to the 88 cities and other jurisdictions with which the County must coordinate.

In addition to aid and the deployment of County resources to areas of need, County employees have a long history of generosity and compassion during disasters, supporting relief efforts such as Hurricane Katrina, Superstorm Sandy, the tsunami in Southeast Asia, and the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. There is a great need for immediate relief in Texas, including food, water and shelter, but the scale of this

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disaster is such that that assistance will be needed over the coming days, weeks, months, and years.

**I THEREFORE MOVE that the Board of Supervisors:**

1. Instruct the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), in conjunction with the Director of the Office of Emergency Management (OEM), to provide a written report in 30 days with:
  - a. An assessment of the current ability of the County of Los Angeles (County) to respond to large-scale disasters within the County, with recommendations to improve its effectiveness.
  - b. An assessment of whether the report back on the emergency readiness level and completion of a current Department Emergency Plan and a Business Continuity Plan of all County departments, as requested by the Ridley-Thomas/Barger motion (approved on June 26, 2017) should include recommendations formulated as a result of the hardships and challenges experienced by various jurisdictions in eastern Texas as a result of Hurricane Harvey, and if so, to include said recommendations in the report back and request additional time, if necessary, to complete the report back which was due in 120 days from June 26, 2017.
  - c. An assessment of current efforts to educate the public about steps that County residents should take to prepare for disasters, with recommendations to improve the effectiveness of such efforts. This

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report should also include a description of the frequency and nature of public outreach efforts.

2. Instruct the Director of the Department of Public Works to provide a written report in 60 days with:
  - a. The number of households and businesses that live and work in each floodplain or flood zone area of the County.
  - b. A plan to educate and inform those households and businesses about the safety risks of living and working in floodplain or flood zone areas that includes proactive steps that they can take to prepare for any emergencies, including the importance of purchasing flood insurance, if optional; the location of emergency shelters; and other relevant information and resources.
3. Instruct the Director of the Department of Public Social Services to provide a written report in 30 days with:
  - a. The number of Hurricane Katrina victims who relocated to Los Angeles County in 2005, with recommendations on how to best serve displaced families and persons based upon lessons learned.
  - b. An assessment of the County's ability to provide or refer to public services those displaced by Hurricane Harvey. This should include a review of processes to verify the displacement of persons seeking services, and identify ways to streamline these processes in order to provide services to displaced persons as quickly as possible.

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4. Direct the Director of the Internal Services Department (ISD), to provide a written report in 30 days with:
  - a. An assessment of whether the recently approved Disaster/Emergency Services Master Agreements, the approved list of vendors, and the amount of delegated authority are sufficient to fulfill ISD's role in ensuring business continuity.
5. Instruct the CEO to provide a written report in 20 days with:
  - a. All possible measures for County employees to assist those affected by Hurricane Harvey, including but not limited to the establishment of an employer leave-based donation program.
6. Authorize the CEO to approve time-off for employees to travel to the impacted area to assist with relief efforts pursuant to a request from responsible agencies for volunteers.
7. Encourage County residents to donate and contribute to charity organizations of their choice to assist with the recovery efforts.

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