

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS, CYBER, AND HOMELAND SECURITY

Resolution ECH-18-10

A RESOLUTION ON IMPLEMENTING UNIFORM WARNING FLAGS AT BEACHES

WHEREAS, the National Black Caucus of State Legislators (NBCSL) maintains that water, beach safety should be a priority and supports the implementation of a uniform flag system that would provide the best measure of safety and to require that all public beaches displaying warning flags use only the flags developed for a uniform warning program;

WHEREAS, many residents and visitors travel across the United States to wonderful public beaches and many beach communities post warning flags;

WHEREAS, differences in flag colors, sizes and symbols from place to place can confuse beach goers, thereby decreasing the effectiveness of efforts to improve public safety;

WHEREAS, the safety and enjoyment of public beaches are affected by changes in tide and surf conditions;

WHEREAS; the beach flags provide general warnings about overall surf conditions and do not specifically advise the public of the presence of rip currents; however, increasing awareness of natural conditions which pose a significant risk at the beach, such as rip currents, is a critical element to improve public safety;

WHEREAS, the National Lifesaving Association in conjunction with the International Lifesaving Federation has developed a flag warning system that has been adopted by coastal communities worldwide; and

WHEREAS, in addition to this warning system, the NBCSL supports the distribution of rip current educational signs to local governments and public parks across the United States.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the National Black Caucus of State Legislators (NBCSL) encourages state policymakers and their membership to gain information regarding beach and water safety and how it affects their constituency and to ensure collaboration with the appropriate agencies to disseminate and supply adequate water safety information to the public;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NBCSL encourages programs and organizations committed to swimming instruction in communities of color;

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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NBCSL encourages uniform standards for pool safety to minimize the likelihood of childhood drownings;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NBCSL encourages the United States Congress to require public beaches to adopt a uniform flag warning system and to post interpretive signs at each public beach entrance; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States, the Vice- President of the United States, members of the U.S. Congress, and other federal and state officials as appropriate.

SPONSOR: Senator Regina Ashford Barrow (LA)

**Committee of Jurisdiction: Emergency Preparedness, Cyber, and Homeland Security
Policy Committee**

Certified by Committee Chair: Representative Willie Perkins (MS)

Ratified in Plenary Session: Ratification Date is December 2, 2017

Ratification is certified by: Representative Gregory W. Porter (IN), President