

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 128

Commending Virginia Task Force 1.

Agreed to by the Senate, January 28, 2010
Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 12, 2010

WHEREAS, Virginia Task Force 1, an elite urban search and rescue team sponsored by the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department, deployed on January 13, 2010, to Port-au-Prince, Haiti, in response to the devastating 7.0 earthquake that hit the country on January 12; and

WHEREAS, Virginia Task Force 1 sent two teams: the first team arrived on January 13, 2010, and the second team arrived on January 15, 2010; and

WHEREAS, the first team completed a 17-hour rescue of a woman trapped at the Hotel Montana in Port-au-Prince; the team members also assisted the French with four successful rescues and part of the team is working with the Spanish team on other rescues; and

WHEREAS, established in 1986, Virginia Task Force 1 is comprised of approximately 200 specially trained career and volunteer fire and rescue personnel with expertise in the rescue of victims from collapsed structures; and

WHEREAS, the team is comprised of emergency managers and planners, physicians and paramedics, and specialists in the fields of structural engineering, heavy rigging, collapse rescue, logistics, hazardous materials, communications, and canine and technical search; and

WHEREAS, Virginia Task Force 1 has partnerships with the Department of Homeland Security/Federal Emergency Management Agency for domestic response and the United States Agency for International Development/Office of United States Foreign Disaster Assistance during international missions; and

WHEREAS, all training, equipment, and personnel costs for Virginia Task Force 1 are paid for by the federal government on a regular basis; and

WHEREAS, the first task force sent to Haiti was composed of 72 personnel and included six search and rescue canines, search and technical rescue personnel, physicians, paramedics, structural engineers, other support personnel, and approximately 48 tons of rescue equipment and supplies; the second task force sent to Haiti was comprised of 42 personnel and one canine; and

WHEREAS, the task force was deployed to the Haitian town of Petionville, near the capital of Port-au-Prince for a school collapse in November of 2008 and has also deployed nationally and internationally to the Oklahoma City bombing, the Pentagon, hurricanes Katrina and Isabel, the bombing in Kenya, and earthquakes in Turkey, Taiwan, and Iran; and

WHEREAS, a world class urban rescue team, Virginia Task Force 1 is comprised of paid professional firefighters and paramedics from Fairfax County and volunteers; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend Virginia Task Force 1 for its readiness and response to the Haitian earthquake; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Virginia Task Force 1 as an expression of the General Assembly's respect, admiration, and gratitude for the team's readiness and service in times of crisis.

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