

112TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. RES. 139

Expressing condolences to the people of New Zealand for the terrible loss of life and property suffered as a result of the deadly earthquake that struck on February 22, 2011.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 2, 2011

Mr. MANZULLO (for himself, Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California, Mr. BRADY of Texas, Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, and Mr. SABLAN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

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## RESOLUTION

Expressing condolences to the people of New Zealand for the terrible loss of life and property suffered as a result of the deadly earthquake that struck on February 22, 2011.

Whereas on February 22, 2011, a massive earthquake measuring 6.3 magnitude on the Richter scale struck the Canterbury region of New Zealand at 12:51 p.m. local time, causing tremendous loss of life and devastation in a region already struggling to rebuild as a result of an earlier quake;

Whereas by March 2, 2011, the death toll had climbed to approximately 250 people with a significant number still missing;

Whereas numerous personal accounts detail the heroism of survivors helping victims escape the rubble and destruction, many of whom were tourists and children;

Whereas the damage to Christchurch was exacerbated as a result of an earlier earthquake, measuring 7.1 magnitude that struck the region on September 4, 2010, and which was followed by hundreds of aftershocks;

Whereas one-third of the buildings in Christchurch's central business district are deemed unsafe, 755 buildings face demolition, and 625 properties in Christchurch's surrounding suburbs are damaged beyond repair;

Whereas roads buckled and water pipes burst, flooding streets and depriving 35 percent of Christchurch's residents from access to potable water;

Whereas the steeple of Christchurch Cathedral, a historic landmark, collapsed with an estimated 22 people feared trapped in the rubble;

Whereas 2 commuter buses were crushed under falling debris;

Whereas Lyttelton Port and the town of New Brighton, both closer to the epicenter of the earthquake, are considered disaster areas;

Whereas the collapsed Christchurch Canterbury Television building housed an English language school with students from Japan, China, Thailand, the Philippines, and South Korea, who are among the casualties;

Whereas New Zealand Prime Minister John Key has described February 22, 2011, as one of New Zealand's darkest days and its worst natural disaster in over 80 years;

Whereas the estimated monetary damage to Christchurch and the greater Canterbury region may exceed \$15,000,000,000 in damages;

Whereas Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton affirmed in the Wellington Declaration on November 4, 2010, that “New Zealand and the United States are both Pacific nations. Our governments and peoples share a deep and abiding interest in maintaining peace, prosperity, and stability in the region, expanding the benefits of freer and more open trade, and promoting and protecting freedom, democracy and human rights worldwide. We recall the long history of shared United States and New Zealand sacrifice in battle and we honor those, past and present, who have borne that sacrifice”;

Whereas the largest congressional delegation ever to visit New Zealand participated in the United States-New Zealand Partnership Forum, held in Christchurch, to deepen the bilateral relationship and promote United States priorities within the Trans-Pacific Partnership trade negotiations, which the delegation left only hours before the earthquake struck;

Whereas the remaining United States delegation at the United States-New Zealand Partnership Forum, which included senior executive branch officials, former legislators, and leaders in business and academia, were also affected by the earthquake;

Whereas the Government of New Zealand offered outstanding support in securing and evacuating the United States delegation in the aftermath of the earthquake;

Whereas the United States has affirmed its support and assistance to the people of New Zealand, sending an 80-

person United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Disaster Assistance Response Team;

Whereas the United States Embassy dispersed to hospitals, shelters, triage centers, and public parks in Christchurch to search for United States citizens in the aftermath of the destruction;

Whereas Embassy personnel in Wellington, New Zealand, opened their homes to house 24 United States evacuees, including 8 students;

Whereas approximately 3,500 United States citizens were believed to be in Christchurch at the time of the earthquake, including delegates to the United States-New Zealand Partnership Forum;

Whereas Australia, Japan, the Philippines, Singapore, Taiwan, the United Kingdom, and other nations have sent rescue teams to assist in the vast rescue mission; and

Whereas President Barack Obama expressed his “deepest condolences to the people of New Zealand and to the families and friends of the victims in Christchurch, which suffered its second major earthquake in just six months”: Now, therefore, be it

1       *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2               (1) expresses its condolences to the people of  
3       New Zealand for the terrible loss of life and prop-  
4       erty suffered as a result of the deadly earthquake  
5       that struck on February 22, 2011;

6               (2) mourns with the people of New Zealand and  
7       all the countries affected by the earthquake;

1           (3) pledges its full support to New Zealand as  
2           the rescue and recovery effort continues;

3           (4) recognizes the humanitarian response cur-  
4           rently underway; and

5           (5) supports the continuing efforts by the  
6           United States Government and private citizens to  
7           assist New Zealand as it copes with this natural dis-  
8           aster.

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