

1 SJR95
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3 By Senators Whatley and Price
4 RFD:
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ENCOURAGING FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL AGENCIES TO
DEVELOP A COMPREHENSIVE POLICY FOR REMOVING DEBRIS AFTER A
NATURAL DISASTER.

WHEREAS, every year the residents of the State of
Alabama are faced with the possibility of a natural disaster
destroying their homes and affecting their communities, most
often by tornadoes, hurricanes, and floods; and

WHEREAS, when a community begins the rebuilding
process after a natural disaster, in addition to coping with
the devastating loss of life, often one of the greatest
challenges to overcome is how to properly and timely remove
disaster-related debris, which can be left behind for weeks or
even months following the natural disaster; and

WHEREAS, disaster debris typically includes downed
trees, limbs, shrubs, solid waste such as household garbage
and personal belongings, construction and demolition debris
such as entire residential structures and their contents,
vehicles, food waste, household and outdoor appliances and
equipment, and all types of hazardous waste, including

1 cleaning agents, pesticides, and pool chemicals, which can be
2 highly toxic to residents and volunteers assisting in the
3 cleanup and rebuild of the area; and

4 WHEREAS, to facilitate the recovery of the area,
5 debris removal is a vital part of the process and proper
6 consideration and management of the removal is necessary to
7 ensure the debris does not pose future threats to the health
8 and safety of residents and the environment; and

9 WHEREAS, federal agencies such as the Federal
10 Emergency Management Agency, the U.S. Environmental Protection
11 Agency, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers provide disaster
12 response and assist in the management of debris clearance,
13 removal, and disposal; and

14 WHEREAS, at the state and local level, the Executive
15 branch, the Alabama Emergency Management Agency, the Alabama
16 Department of Environmental Management, the Alabama Department
17 of Transportation, the Association of County Commissions of
18 Alabama, the League of Municipalities, local emergency
19 management agencies, along with other state and local
20 agencies, provide critical emergency assistance to
21 storm-ravaged areas in the state, but are limited in their
22 debris removal assistance after the storms have passed; and

23 WHEREAS, to better assist communities in such a
24 crucial time of need, a comprehensive debris removal policy
25 that includes, but is not limited to, the cost of debris
26 removal, the responsibilities of each assisting local, state,
27 or federal agency in the debris removal process, and a time

1 frame for completion of the debris removal would greatly
2 improve the likelihood that a community affected by a natural
3 disaster can timely begin to rebuild and move forward after a
4 natural disaster; and

5 WHEREAS, whenever possible, the local, state, or
6 federal agencies involved in the debris removal process are
7 urged to use local contractors to implement and execute the
8 debris removal and to facilitate other assistance in the
9 aftermath of a natural disaster in accordance with the
10 policies created and established by the comprehensive debris
11 removal policy; and

12 WHEREAS, without a proper comprehensive debris
13 removal policy after a natural disaster, managing potentially
14 huge volumes of mixed debris can be complicated for an already
15 overwhelmed community; a comprehensive debris removal policy
16 outlining the costs, agency responsibilities, and management
17 of the process will provide better preparedness to restore
18 public services and ensure the public health and safety in the
19 aftermath of a disaster and better position communities to
20 receive the full level of assistance available to them from
21 all local, state, and federal sources; now therefore,

22 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA, BOTH
23 HOUSES THEREOF CONCURRING, That we encourage all local, state,
24 and federal agencies equipped to assist with debris removal
25 after a natural disaster to work together to develop a
26 comprehensive policy for removing debris from communities
27 affected by a natural disaster.

1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we urge the local,
2 state, or federal agencies involved in the debris removal
3 process to use local contractors to implement and execute the
4 debris removal and to facilitate other assistance in the
5 aftermath of a natural disaster in accordance with the
6 policies created and established by the comprehensive debris
7 removal policy.