

SENATE RESOLUTION

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By Senators Baumgartner, Dansel, Billig, Padden, Schoesler, King, Fraser, and Hobbs

1 WHEREAS, On November 17, 2015, a storm hit Washington state
2 packing hurricane-force winds, recorded at 119 miles per hour in the
3 Cascade Mountains and 71 miles per hour near Spokane; and

4 WHEREAS, Three deaths were attributed to the storm, as well as
5 millions of dollars in structural damage; and

6 WHEREAS, Electric utilities in the Inland Northwest, including
7 Inland Power and Light, Kootenai Electric Cooperative, and Avista
8 Utilities, sustained significant damage that caused prolonged
9 outages; and

10 WHEREAS, Nearly 180,000 Avista Utility customers lost power,
11 surpassing the notorious ice storm in 1996 and making it the largest
12 outage in the utility's 126-year history; and

13 WHEREAS, Governor Jay Inslee declared a state of emergency on
14 November 18, 2015; and

15 WHEREAS, The state of Washington as well as agencies of
16 neighboring states worked to ensure expedited and unencumbered travel
17 for crews that came to support restoration efforts; and

18 WHEREAS, 700 individuals comprising 132 utility, contract, and
19 mutual aid crews from six western states and Canada worked 16-hour
20 shifts over nearly 10 days to restore service to all Avista
21 customers; and

22 WHEREAS, Scores of volunteers from the city of Spokane, Spokane
23 County, Avista, and community organizations went door-to-door to

1 check on vulnerable citizens who were without power, providing food,
2 shelter, and assistance to those who needed it; and

3 WHEREAS, Utility customers exhibited incredible resilience and
4 patience and demonstrated appreciation to the crews working to
5 restore power, bringing them coffee and food and offering
6 encouragement; and

7 WHEREAS, Spokane city and county leaders, first responders,
8 community support agencies, and countless others worked together to
9 help the community and region recover from the storm; and

10 WHEREAS, By 3:45 a.m. Friday, November 27, crews had successfully
11 restored power to the nearly 180,000 Avista customers, working
12 through adverse weather and demanding conditions without a single
13 safety incident;

14 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Washington State Senate
15 hereby recognize and honor the citizens and community leaders of the
16 Inland Northwest, as well as utility workers from Washington and
17 throughout the region.

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