A RESOLUTION

Recognizing the hard work and dedication of the first responders, members of local law enforcement, emergency management agencies, utility workers and township and county officials who responded to the large-scale emergency situation that took place in Wilkes-Barre on June 13, 2018, as a result of a category EF2 tornado.

WHEREAS, On the evening of June 13, 2018, a tornado warning was issued to the general public of Wilkes-Barre and the surrounding areas; and

WHEREAS, At 9:55 p.m., approximately five minutes before the tornado touched down, a "take shelter" text alert was transmitted to local cell phone users; and

WHEREAS, According to the National Weather Service, a category EF2 tornado with wind speeds in excess of 130 miles per hour struck the Mundy Street commercial district in Wilkes-Barre Township at approximately 10 p.m.; and

WHEREAS, Once on the ground, the tornado traveled for nearly
three quarters of a mile during a five-minute period; and

WHEREAS, According to a local news report, the path of the
tornado was evident since the tornado left a trail of
destruction in which roofs were blown off of commercial retail
establishments and restaurants, while the windshields of new
vehicles were severely damaged at a local dealership; and

WHEREAS, Unfortunately, some of the area's buildings and
properties sustained extensive damage, and nearly 25 utility
poles were knocked down or damaged, leading to power outages and
dangerous conditions for bystanders and first responders; and

WHEREAS, Although six people sustained minor injuries, an
official for the American Red Cross stated that the area was
fortunate in that, had the storm happened earlier in the day
during rush hour, the damage and injuries endured could have
been significantly worse; and

WHEREAS, As soon as the tornado passed, first responders,
members of local law enforcement, emergency management agencies
and township and county officials acted quickly to secure a
local retail establishment where firearms and ammunition are
sold; and

WHEREAS, In addition, these individuals evacuated animals
from a local pet store that was severely damaged by the tornado,
ensuring that the animals were properly cared for and secured
during the subsequent cleanup; and

WHEREAS, First responders and utility workers on the scene
were placed in additional danger when having to secure an area
and evacuate individuals in the immediate vicinity due to the
unexpected venting of a 1,000-gallon propane tank that had been
damaged by the tornado; and

WHEREAS, In the days following the tornado, members of the
Pennsylvania Keystone Incident Management Team and the Luzerne County Emergency Management Agency worked diligently to inspect all commercial buildings in the immediate area of the tornado's path to determine if the structures were safe to reopen, required repairs or needed to be demolished; and

WHEREAS, The hard work and quick response by the community's first responders, members of local law enforcement, emergency management agencies and township and county officials helped to ensure the health and safety of residents in Wilkes-Barre and the surrounding areas; and

WHEREAS, This hard work and quick response also allowed the Mundy Street commercial district in Wilkes-Barre Township to be successfully restored to its normal operations in a timely manner; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives recognize the hard work and dedication of the first responders, members of local law enforcement, emergency management agencies, utility workers and township and county officials who responded to the large-scale emergency situation that took place in Wilkes-Barre on June 13, 2018, as a result of a category EF2 tornado.