

Administration of Donald J. Trump, 2018

Remarks at a Briefing on Hurricane Florence Recovery Efforts in Conway, South Carolina

September 19, 2018

Governor Henry D. McMaster of South Carolina. Well, for those of you who haven't been here for a while, welcome to South Carolina, welcome to Conway, welcome to Horry County. And if you've been looking for rain and water, you've come to the right place. [*Laughter*]

Listen, we are delighted to have the President here and others, as well. We have not had a disaster like this one before. Hurricane Hugo, in 1989, was a tremendous blow, but it came in in McClellanville, just above Charleston, and went through in a hurry.

[*At this point, Gov. McMaster continued his remarks, concluding as follows.*]

So we are confident that we are going to build our way out of this. We've managed the hurricane. Now we've got to manage the floods. And then, we'll manage the reconstruction and the rebuilding.

And one great thing that we have helping us is this man standing behind me, President Donald Trump, one in a million. South Carolina loves you, and we're delighted you're here.

The President. Thank you very much. [*Applause*] First of all, Henry, thank you. And you're doing a fantastic job. Everybody—everybody—the job that you're doing, the coordination.

We just left North Carolina. They got hit really, really hard, and they are working. And all of that water is coming your way. A lot of people don't know that. They assume, and you look outside and you see this beautiful weather, but over the next couple of days, it's going to get rough in South Carolina.

So the Federal Government is behind you. We have Lindsey Graham here. We have Tim. Where's Tim and Lindsey? Tim Scott. They have really—they're with us all the way. They're with us all the way. And whatever we need from Washington, we are there.

Our team—I don't think there's ever been a team like this. From everybody—virtually everybody said it—what we're doing on a Federal basis, what you're doing on a local basis, and the coordination has been absolutely incredible.

So I know you have a rough few days. And then, it will last a long time. It could last a long time. But you're going to have a rebuilding process, and we are behind you from day one. From 3 days ago, and now it looks nice, but it's really the calm before the storm. Because you're going to have a lot of water.

We see it; it's coming down. It just comes down. Nobody would believe a thing like this could happen. And already, you've broken all records, and this is going to add 4, 5, 6 feet of water all over the State.

So Washington is with you. Trump is with you. We are all with you a hundred percent. And we'll get through it. And I think the most exciting part is going to be that rebuild, because we're going to have a lot of rebuilding. I flew over, and there's a lot of damage. And you haven't really been hit yet by comparison to what's coming.

So I love South Carolina. I love this State. I'm very proud of Henry McMaster and the job he's done as your Governor. And I can tell you that Tim and Lindsey and myself, and Tom from—the great Congressman—we're all in there fighting. And it's going to work out very well.

This room, the job you do is great. And we really want to thank you. This is real emergency stuff at the highest level. And we want to thank you. So anything I can do, you all know where to call me. *[Laughter]* And we will be there for South Carolina. We're going to be there for this disaster. Thank you all.

I'd like to introduce a man who has truly been working overtime, and he has been prepared for this for actually a long time. But over the last 4 or 5 days, there's nobody that's worked harder than General Livingston. And I just want to thank you. And, General, maybe you could say a few words?

South Carolina National Guard Adjutant General Maj. Gen. Robert E. Livingston, Jr., USA. Thank you, Mr. President. Yes, sir. And thank you so much. You know, in South Carolina, we always talk about Team South Carolina. And everybody sitting out here is part of Team South Carolina. And I've told that to the President; I said, maybe you ought to call it Team America now that Libby is here, and O'Shaughnessy has come in, and Lengyel has come in. He says, "No, I like South Carolina." He wants to be part of our team. *[Laughter]* So that's Team South Carolina.

[Gen. Livingston continued his remarks, concluding as follows.]

I do want to give a real quick shout-out to the Governor's military force, the South Carolina National Guard. While we're fighting this flood, we've got men and women down on the Southwest border, we've got men and women in Afghanistan, and we've got men and women in Kuwait fighting the Syrian battle, taking care of this Nation while we also take care of our people.

Mr. President, thank you so much for your support of this great State.

The President. Thank you very much. Appreciate it.

Horry County, SC, Emergency Management Director Randall S. Webster. So to kind of put things in perspective at the local level, first off, thank you to everyone who is involved in this. And many of you in this room are victims as well. And the support that you've given this operation, plus those in the field that are supporting what's going on, not only—you know, all the volunteers, all the staff, everybody, all the coordination between all the jurisdictions. In my opinion, this is the way it's supposed to be done. And I think we're showing that each and every day.

[Director Webster continued his remarks concluding as follows.]

And we will get through it. We'll make it happen. And we'll all be better for it in the end. And I'm just very proud. And, Mr. President, I just want to thank you for your commitment and help on the Federal level for everything you're doing for us.

The President. Thank you very much. So good luck, everybody. We're with you all the way, 100 percent. Thank you very much. Thank you. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:40 p.m. at the Horry County Emergency Management Center. In his remarks, he referred to Sens. Lindsey O. Graham and Timothy E. Scott; and Rep. H. Thompson Rice, Jr. Maj. Gen. Livingston referred to Libby Turner, Federal Coordinating Officer, Federal Emergency Management Agency; Gen. Terrence J. O'Shaughnessy, USAF, Commander, U.S. Northern Command; and Chief of National Guard Bureau Gen. Joseph L. Lengyel, USAF.

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