

Senators Proos, Jansen, Booher, Schuitmaker and Nofs offered the following resolution:

Senate Resolution No. 140.

A resolution to memorialize the President of the United States and the United States Secretary of Agriculture to declare the Southwest Michigan fruit-growing region a disaster area in the wake of weather conditions that have devastated grape production.

Whereas, In 2010, Michigan produced 36,000 tons of grapes with a net value of \$15.4 million. Grapes grown in Southwest Michigan are used for juice and wine production around the country. Welch's Foods relies on Michigan growers for 17 percent of its grape supplies for its juice production; and

Whereas, Warm temperatures in Michigan have wreaked havoc on Michigan's grape, apple, and other fruit and vegetable crops. The early warmth caused plants to sprout prematurely, putting them at risk of damage when devastating frost occurred in early April; and

Whereas, An estimated 10,000 acres or approximately 95 percent of the crop in Southwest Michigan were destroyed by the April frost. It is projected that grape farmers alone will realize a loss of over \$20 million for the 2012 season; and

Whereas, The U.S. Department of Agriculture offers several programs to help farmers recover financially from a natural disaster. In order for low-interest loans and other federal assistance to be available to the fruit and vegetable growers, Southwest Michigan must be declared a disaster area; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate, That we urge the President of the United States and the United States Secretary of Agriculture to declare the Southwest Michigan fruit-growing region a disaster area in the wake of weather conditions that have devastated grape production; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States, the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, and the members of the Michigan congressional delegation.