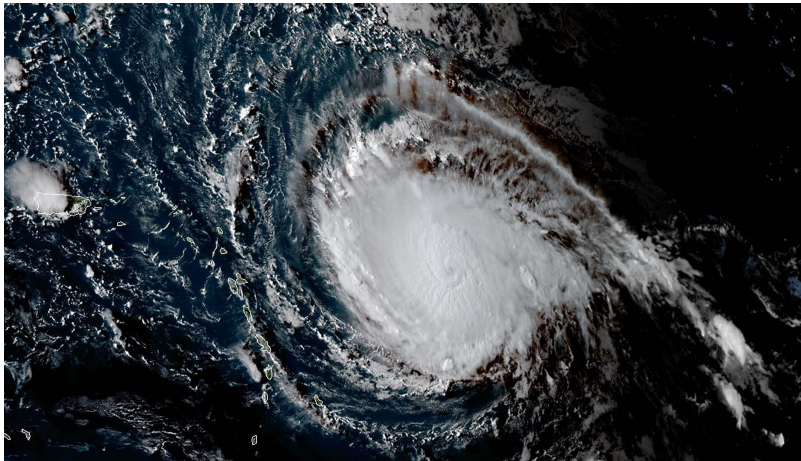U.S.

Florida Gov. Scott Issues State of Emergency for Hurricane Irma

Category 4 storm approaching the northeastern Caribbean Monday evening

Hurricane Irma grew into a Category Four storm Monday as it churned toward the Leeward islands, sparking alarm and alerts from the Caribbean to Florida. **PHOTO:** HO/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE/GETTY IMAGES

Associated Press

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NAPLES, Fla.—Florida Gov. Rick Scott has declared a state of emergency in all of the state's 67 counties in advance of Hurricane Irma.

In a news release issued Monday afternoon, Mr. Scott said the order is meant to ensure governments have "ample time, resources and flexibility to get prepared" for the storm.

Hurricane Irma grew into a powerful Category 4 storm Monday as it approached the northeastern Caribbean and was forecast to begin buffeting islands there Tuesday.

The governor said that since many of the storm models have Florida in Irma's path, he advises residents to take time to make preparations.

Mr. Scott said Floridians should stay vigilant and monitor weather conditions over the coming days. He said the state of emergency allows emergency management officials to act swiftly without the burden of red tape.

"This hurricane has the potential to be a major event for the East Coast. It also has the potential to significantly strain FEMA and other governmental resources occurring so quickly on the heels of Harvey," Evan Myers, chief operating officer of AccuWeather, said Monday.

Emergency officials warned that Irma could dump up to 10 inches of rain, unleash landslides and dangerous flash floods and generate waves of up to 23 feet in the Caribbean, when it hits Tuesday.

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