

SENATE RESOLUTION 6

(By Senators Hamilton, Deeds, Garcia, Hart, Jeffries,
Morris, Queen, Rose, Rucker, Tarr, Woodrum, and
Woelfel)

[Introduced February 14, 2025]

1 Commemorating the 75th anniversary of the Sport Fish Restoration Program as part of the
2 American system of conservation funding.

3 Whereas, More than a century ago, hunters and anglers were among the first
4 conservationists who realized America's natural resources were in peril and could not sustain
5 unregulated harvest and habitat destruction; and

6 Whereas, Sportsmen and women took it upon themselves to support laws that stopped
7 excessive harvest of fish and wildlife, established state agencies to protect fish, wildlife, and their
8 habitat, and supported special fishing and hunting license fees to help fund the new agencies'
9 efforts to provide healthy natural resources for future generations; and

10 Whereas, The Senate then and now recognize that the primary authority to protect and
11 manage fish within their state waters resides in the state agencies; and

12 Whereas, Upon realizing that license fees alone were insufficient to restore and sustain
13 healthy fish populations, anglers supported excise taxes on fishing equipment to raise additional
14 funds to support restoration and enhancement efforts of the state agencies; and

15 Whereas, The Sport Fish Restoration Program, which began 75 years ago with the
16 passage of the Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Act in 1950 (further expanded with the
17 Wallop-Breaux amendment to the Sport Fish Restoration Act in 1984) is a vital part of
18 conservation funding in the United States; and

1 Whereas, A manufacturer's excise tax on fishing equipment, along with an excise tax on
2 motorboat and small engine fuels, is mostly distributed back to the states through the U. S. Fish
3 and Wildlife Service for fisheries conservation, management, and angler and boater access; and

4 Whereas, This cooperative partnership between the sportfishing industry, anglers,
5 boaters, the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and state natural resource agencies has resulted in
6 the most successful model of fisheries management in the world, restoring and enhancing
7 populations across the United States and its territories; and

8 Whereas, Since 1939, the combined contribution of the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration
9 Programs and license fees to state fish and wildlife agencies exceeds \$78 billion, more than any
10 other single conservation effort in American history, which constitute, collectively, the American
11 System of Conservation Funding; therefore, be it

12 *Resolved by the Senate:*

13 That the Senate hereby commemorates the 75th anniversary of the Sport Fish Restoration
14 Program as part of the American system of conservation funding; and, be it

15 *Further Resolved,* That the Senate recognizes America's anglers, boaters, the sportfishing
16 industry, state fish and wildlife agencies, and the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service for their leading
17 role in restoring healthy populations of fish and aquatic resources, both game and non-game, to
18 the abundance we see today with the help of the Sport Fish Restoration Program, in this the 75th
19 anniversary year of the program's establishment as part of the American System of Conservation
20 Funding; and, be it

21 *Further Resolved,* That the Clerk is hereby directed to forward a copy of this resolution to
22 the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources, all West Virginia Congressional offices, and local,
23 regional and national media sources so that all may know and appreciate the foresight and
24 contributions from anglers, the sportfishing industry, state fish and wildlife agencies, and the U. S.
25 Fish and Wildlife Service on behalf of our nation's fisheries and aquatic resources.