

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 67

BY SENATOR THOMPSON

A RESOLUTION

To commemorate the eightieth anniversary of the American System of Conservation Funding.

WHEREAS, more than a century ago, sportsmen and women were among the first conservationists who realized America's natural resources were in peril and could not sustain unregulated harvest and habitat destruction; and

WHEREAS, sportsmen and women took it upon themselves to support laws that stopped excessive harvest of fish and wildlife, established game and fish agencies to protect fish and wildlife and their habitat, and supported fishing and hunting license fees to help fund the new agencies' efforts to provide for healthy natural resources for future generations; and

WHEREAS, upon realizing that license fees alone were insufficient to restore and sustain healthy fish and wildlife populations, sportsmen and women supported excise taxes on firearms, ammunition, archery equipment, hunting equipment, and fishing equipment to raise additional funds to support restoration and enhancement efforts of state agencies; and

WHEREAS, this "user-pays, public-benefits" system became known as the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program, and it began eighty years ago with the passage of the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act in 1937, and then was bolstered with the passage of the Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Act in 1950, and the Wallop-Breaux amendment to the Sport Fish Restoration Act in 1984; and

WHEREAS, the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program also permanently linked revenue from hunting and angling licenses to conservation, creating the American System of Conservation Funding as it exists today; and

WHEREAS, the combined contribution of the American System of Conservation Funding to state fish and wildlife agencies exceeds fifty-seven billion dollars, more than any other single conservation effort in American history; and

WHEREAS, the manufacturers of firearms, ammunition, and hunting, fishing and boating equipment have collected excise taxes on firearms, ammunition, archery equipment, manufactured fishing tackle, electric trolling motors, marine electronics, and motorboat fuel and distributed these funds to the states through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; and

WHEREAS, this cooperative partnership between industry, hunters, anglers, trappers, boaters, recreational shooters, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and state natural resource agencies has resulted in the most successful model of fish and wildlife management in the world, restoring populations from coast to coast and in Alaska and Hawaii.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby commend America's hunters, anglers, trappers, boaters, recreational shooters, industry, state fish and wildlife agencies, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for their leading role in restoring healthy populations of fish and wildlife and other natural resources, both game and nongame, to the abundance we see today, and does hereby commemorate the eightieth anniversary of the American System of Conservation Funding.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the secretary of the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries and the director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE