

## J3687-2011 Text

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION commemorating the 75th Anniversary of the Wild life and Sportfish Restoration Program, America's greatest conservation story

WHEREAS, More than a century ago, hunters, anglers and trappers 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, Hunters, anglers and trappers took it upon themselves to support laws that stopped excessive harvest of fish and wildlife, established game and fish agencies to protect fish, wildlife and their habitat, and supported special fishing and hunting license fees to help fund the new agencies' efforts to provide for healthy natural resources for future generations; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body, then and now, recognizes the primary authority to protect and manage fish and resident wildlife within their borders resides in the state fish and wildlife agencies; and

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

WHEREAS, This user pay-public benefit system became known as the Wild life and Sport Fish Restoration Program that began 75 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 Sportfish Restoration Act in 1950, (further expanded with the Wallop-Breaux amendment to the Sportfish Restoration Act in 1984); and

WHEREAS, The combined contribution of the Wildlife and Sportfish Restoration Programs to state fish and wildlife agencies exceeds \$13 Billion since 1939 (the first year money was distributed to the states) -- more than any other single conservation effort in American history -- which constitute, collectively, the American System of Conservation Funding; and

WHEREAS, The manufacturers of firearms, ammunition, 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, The manufacturers of firearms, ammunition, hunting, fishing, and boating equipment have supported the Wildlife and Sportfish Restoration Programs and continue to exhibit a spirit of cooperation with the state fish and wildlife agencies; 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, Alaska and Hawaii; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the 75th Anniversary of the Wildlife and Sportfish Restoration Program, America's greatest conservation story, and to recognize 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, wildlife and other natural resources; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation.