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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 372

Offered January 25, 2000

Recognizing Virginia's forests and the forest industry's Sustainable Forestry Initiative.

Patrons—Pollard, Abbitt, Barlow, Bloxom, Bryant, Byron, Cox, Deeds, Katzen, Landes, Melvin, Orrock, Ruff, Sherwood and Van Yahres; Senators: Bolling, Couric, Hawkins, Houck, Puckett, Ticer, Watkins and Whipple

Consent to introduce

Referred to Committee on Conservation and Natural Resources

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth is blessed with more than 15.4 million acres of renewable, constantly growing commercial forest land; and

WHEREAS, the market value at first point of delivery of Virginia's forest products is in excess of \$416 million annually; and

WHEREAS, landowners earned \$196 million from the sale of timber on their lands during 1993; and

WHEREAS, forest management activities contribute \$234 million annually to the Commonwealth's economy; and

WHEREAS, the combined forest recreational values contribute more than \$1.7 billion annually to Virginia; and

WHEREAS, minor forest products contribute \$35.2 million to Virginia's economy; and

WHEREAS, forests will continue to yield into perpetuity a biodiversity of game and non-game wildlife and plant materials, from the smallest cell plants and animals to relatively large understory trees, shrubs, and mammals; and

WHEREAS, other perpetual benefits accrue from the well-managed forest, such as clean water, purification and cleaning of air, prevention and reduction of siltation due to runoff into streams, enrichment of forest soils through leaf fall and decomposition, cooling of summer air due to shade and transpiration from tree leaves and needles, relative warming of winter air resulting from reduction of wind velocity, and immeasurable aesthetic values known only to each person enjoying them; and

WHEREAS, when viewed in its entirety, our forest resource contributes \$11.5 billion annually to the economy of the Commonwealth, and many times this value in non-economic resources; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia forest products industry, in recognition of its stewardship responsibilities in nurturing the forest resource in its entirety, has committed itself to the continuing principles of ecological management and sustainable forestry by initiating a Sustainable Forestry Initiative to promote, educate, train, and monitor adherence to sustaining the complete forest resource for future generations; and

WHEREAS, the Sustainable Forestry Initiative is based on the responsible environmental stewardship of the forests, land, water, and wildlife; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, that the General Assembly commend Virginia's forest industry for its history of care and commitment to the responsible use of resources; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the General Assembly recognize the development of the Sustainable Forestry Initiative, which is educating foresters, landowners, loggers, and the general public about the sustainability of Virginia's forests; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the General Assembly endorse and support the Sustainable Forestry Initiative and its objectives of increasing knowledge, understanding, professionalism, and stewardship that will foster the sustained yield of all benefits, economic and ecological, from Virginia's forests for the present as well as for all future generations; and, be it

RESOLVED FINALLY, That the General Assembly request and encourage the public, forest landowners, environmental organizations, and resource agencies to embrace and support the objectives of the Sustainable Forestry Initiative in this Commonwealth.

INTRODUCED

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