

2000 SESSION

INTRODUCED

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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 249

Offered January 24, 2000

Requesting the Department of Conservation and Recreation to develop a plan, in conjunction with localities comprising the Upper Valley Regional Park Authority, for a possible partnership with the state or the gradual conversion to state ownership of Grand Caverns and Natural Chimneys Regional Parks.

Patrons—Hanger and Miller, K.G.; Delegates: Deeds, Harris, Landes and Weatherholtz

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, the 1999 Session of the General Assembly passed Senate Joint Resolution No. 403, requesting the Department of Conservation and Recreation to study the feasibility of including Grand Caverns and Natural Chimneys Regional Parks in the state park system; and

WHEREAS, Grand Caverns consists of approximately 99 acres, and Natural Chimneys consists of approximately 130 acres, with both parks located in Augusta County; and

WHEREAS, the Department chose an independent consultant to conduct the study; and

WHEREAS, the consultant found that Grand Caverns and Natural Chimneys contain geologic, historic, natural, and cultural resources that are of statewide significance and are worthy of protecting within the Virginia State Park System; and

WHEREAS, both sites contain rare, threatened or endangered species, geologic, cultural, and other resources that could be key elements of a major environmental educational programming opportunity for the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, the consultant concluded that "...due to the significance of these varied resources and their key location in the Shenandoah Valley, it is feasible to incorporate Natural Chimneys and Grand Caverns Regional Parks into the state park system"; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the Department of Conservation and Recreation be requested to develop a plan, in conjunction with localities comprising the Upper Valley Regional Park Authority, for a possible partnership with the state or the gradual conversion to state ownership of Grand Caverns and Natural Chimneys Regional Parks.

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