

1997 SESSION

INTRODUCED

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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 296

Offered January 20, 1997

Requesting the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries to conduct a study on providing fish passage at Embry Dam.

Patrons—Houck, Chichester and Miller, K.G.; Delegates: Davies, Howell and Orrock

Referred to the Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth, as part of the multi-jurisdictional Chesapeake Bay Agreement has committed to efforts to restore the living resources of Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries, including a commitment to "provide for fish passage at dams, and remove stream blockages whenever necessary to restore natural passage for migratory fish"; and

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth and the other Bay states have committed to opening 1356.75 miles of fish spawning habitat along the major Bay tributaries by the year 2003, to seek necessary funding and to commit resources to reach the goal; and

WHEREAS, providing fish passage at Embry Dam would provide hundreds of miles of additional fish spawning area and has been identified as a major need in order to reach the fish passage goal; and

WHEREAS, increased spawning areas for migratory fish species, including rock fish, shad and herring are not only vital to restoring important living resources of the Bay and its tributaries but also to providing stimulus to local and state economies through recreational and commercial fishing opportunities; and

WHEREAS, sediment has accumulated behind Embry Dam and the dam's physical condition is deteriorating; and

WHEREAS, providing fish passage at Embry dam will require preliminary study and coordination between the City of Fredericksburg, the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries and numerous other local, state and federal agencies; and

WHEREAS, it is critical to take immediate action to begin the process of determining the steps to take and the feasibility of various options for providing fish passage at Embry Dam and to do so in a manner that assures that the local impact of such options will be considered; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries be requested to undertake a study on providing fish passage at Embry Dam. The study shall be conducted in close association with the City of Fredericksburg and shall strive to include all necessary local, state and federal agencies to identify: (i) previous studies relevant to providing fish passage at Embry Dam; (ii) any further study needs; (iii) steps necessary to achieve fish passage at Embry Dam; and (iv) various options, including funding needs and options, to create the fish passage.

All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries for this study, upon request.

The Department of Game and Inland Fisheries shall complete its work in time to submit its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the 1998 Session of the General Assembly as provided in the procedures of the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative documents.

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