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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 268

Offered January 11, 2017

Prefiled January 6, 2017

Designating September 23, 2017, as National Hunting and Fishing Day in Virginia.

Patron—Hanger

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, Virginia has a rich and storied tradition of hunting and angling that dates back further than the official formation of the Commonwealth and continues to this day; and

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth's sportsmen and sportswomen were among the first conservationists to support the establishment of the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (DGIF) to protect fish and wildlife and their habitats and, through their license fees, helped fund state efforts to provide for healthy and sustainable natural resources; and

WHEREAS, upon realizing that license fees alone were insufficient to restore and sustain healthy fish and wildlife populations, sportsmen and sportswomen supported excise taxes on firearms and ammunition, as well as hunting, fishing, archery, and boating equipment, to raise additional conservation funds; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries is still funded primarily by sportsmen and sportswomen through the American System of Conservation Funding, in which the user pays and the public benefits; the approach is widely recognized as the most successful system of fish and wildlife management in the world; and

WHEREAS, in 2015 alone, Virginia's sportsmen and sportswomen generated more than \$75 million through this system to support the conservation efforts of DGIF; and

WHEREAS, Virginia's 1,068,000 hunters and anglers support the Commonwealth's economy by spending more than \$2.38 billion to engage in their pursuits; this spending supports more than 39,000 jobs in Virginia and generates \$242 million in state and local taxes; and

WHEREAS, National Hunting and Fishing Day was established in 1972 to celebrate and recognize hunters and anglers for their immense contributions to fish and wildlife conservation and to American society; and

WHEREAS, the time-honored traditions of hunting and angling provide many social, cultural, economic, and ecological benefits to the citizens of the Commonwealth, and hunters, anglers, recreational shooters, and trappers make many contributions to the conservation of Virginia's natural resources; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly designate September 23, 2017, as National Hunting and Fishing Day in Virginia; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate transmit a copy of this resolution to the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries so that members of DGIF may be apprised of the sense of the General Assembly of Virginia in this matter; and, be it

RESOLVED FINALLY, That the Clerk of the Senate post the designation of this day on the General Assembly's website.

INTRODUCED

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