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## SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 399

Offered February 12, 2019

*Commending Virginia's State Forests.*

Patrons—Peake; Delegate: Fariss

WHEREAS, in 1919 Emmett D. Gallion bequeathed his 588 acres of woodlands to the Virginia Forest Service to create the first Virginia State Forest; and

WHEREAS, over the next 100 years additional properties were acquired or donated to become new state forests; and

WHEREAS, as of 2019, the Virginia Department of Forestry owns and manages 24 state forests, totaling 68,858 acres; and

WHEREAS, these forests are managed to conserve biological diversity, utilize their productive capacity, maintain their health and vigor, enhance the carbon cycle, increase socioeconomic benefits, protect water quality, and provide recreational opportunities to the residents of and visitors to Virginia; and

WHEREAS, the majority of the Commonwealth's total acreage is forestland, and the Virginia Department of Forestry protects and develops healthy, sustainable forest resources for the benefit of all Virginians; and

WHEREAS, well-managed forests benefit Virginia's economy, communities, air, water, soil and wildlife, and the continued sustainable management of Virginia's State Forests is crucial to the economic vitality of the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, Virginia's forests provide an overall economic output of more than \$21 billion annually, employing more than 108,000 Virginians in forestry, forest products, and related industries; and

WHEREAS, active and viable forest product markets are necessary to support healthy forests, and Virginia's State Forests are being sustainably managed to meet the numerous environmental and economic needs of the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, the global demand for certified forest products has increased due to corporate environmental responsibility, green building standards, and government regulation; and

WHEREAS, the use of wood originating from well-managed forests is prudent, and Virginia forest landowners and forest product manufacturers benefit from access to certified product markets where the adoption of these systems occur; and

WHEREAS, certification to the Sustainable Forestry Initiative and American Tree Farm System Standards provides a trustworthy and internationally recognized assurance to the marketplace that timber sources are managed and harvested in an environmentally responsible way; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend Virginia's State Forests on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the establishment of the first such forest; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the Virginia Department of Forestry as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for the environmental, economic, and recreational benefits of Virginia's State Forests.

INTRODUCED

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