

2023 SESSION

INTRODUCED

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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 395

Offered February 20, 2023

Commending Bob Wilbanks.

Patrons—Reeves, Boysko, Edwards, Hanger, Hashmi, Howell, Spruill and Vogel; Delegates: Hope, Lopez, Rasoul, Ware and Watts

WHEREAS, for his achievements in sustainable pastureland management, Bob Wilbanks of Rapidan was selected by the Virginia division of the American Forage and Grassland Council to represent the Commonwealth at the organization's annual conference in January 2023; and

WHEREAS, Bob Wilbanks grew up on a hog and tobacco farm in Tennessee and owned a small ranch in Texas before settling in the Piedmont region; and

WHEREAS, when Bob Wilbanks purchased his farm for his beef cattle in Rapidan, it originally consisted of a 225-acre open grazing area with low soil fertility and several spots of naked ground; and

WHEREAS, working with the Culpeper Soil and Water Conservation District cost share programs, Bob Wilbanks developed a diversified grazing system; he added fences to allow for rotational grazing and created riparian buffers to protect the creek that runs through his property and create habitats for local wildlife; and

WHEREAS, Bob Wilbanks cultivated grasses that promote good health for both the environment and his cattle, and by cycling the cattle through certain pastures and rotating crops through others, he is able to keep his cattle grazing approximately 300 days a year, saving money by significantly reducing the need to grow or purchase hay; and

WHEREAS, with the cattle padding nutrients back into the soil naturally, the increased level of organic matter on the farm allowed Bob Wilbanks to stop purchasing nitrogen fertilizer; and

WHEREAS, Bob Wilbanks will continue to share his best management practices with other farmers in the Commonwealth and throughout the nation to help them produce better results for their businesses and safeguard valuable natural resources; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend Bob Wilbanks, who represented Virginia at the American Forage and Grassland Council's annual conference in 2023; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Bob Wilbanks as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for his contributions to the agriculture sector in the Commonwealth.

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