

# 1995 SESSION

INTRODUCED

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## SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 376

Offered January 23, 1995

*Requesting the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries to study whether the raising, releasing and shooting of pen-reared mallard ducks in shooting preserves should be permitted in the Commonwealth.*

Patron—Earley

Referred to the Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, factors such as habitat loss due to destruction of wetlands has drastically reduced waterfowl populations along the North Atlantic flyway; and

WHEREAS, this reduction in waterfowl numbers has had a negative effect on hunting in the Commonwealth by rendering waterfowl less accessible to hunters; and

WHEREAS, one way to allow hunters greater access to waterfowl is to pen-rear the birds and then release them in shooting preserves; and

WHEREAS, at least one neighboring state currently allows the pen-raising and releasing of mallard ducks in regulated shooting areas; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries does not currently allow pen-rearing of ducks for this purpose, but does allow ring-necked pheasants to be raised and used in this manner; and

WHEREAS, questions exist as to possible effects of allowing raising and releasing of mallard ducks, including whether the birds would be more susceptible to disease than wild birds and upon release would infect the wild bird population, whether such birds would breed with wild birds of the same or different species and the effects of such breeding, and whether such birds would possess food-acquisition, predator avoidance and other survival skills commensurate with those of wild birds, and

WHEREAS, questions exist as to whether the availability of mallards for hunting has the potential to increase the stability of wild bird populations by reducing hunting pressure on wild birds; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries be requested to study whether pen-raising, releasing and shooting of mallard ducks in shooting preserves should be allowed in Virginia. The study shall consider the effects that releasing of pen-reared mallard ducks might have on wild duck populations and whether the raising and releasing of ducks in shooting preserves would create additional hunting opportunities in the Commonwealth.

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

The Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries shall complete its work in time to submit its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the 1996 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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