

Regular Session, 2004

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 75

BY SENATORS N. GAUTREAUX, AMEDEE, BOASSO, CHAISSON, DUPRE, B. GAUTREAUX, HAINKEL, MCPHERSON, MOUNT, ROMERO, SCHEDLER, THEUNISSEN, MALONE AND MICHOT AND REPRESENTATIVE FRITH

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To memorialize the Congress of the United States to authorize and fund the establishment of the Coastal Forest Reserve Program, and to urge the United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service, the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry, and the Louisiana State University School of Renewable Natural Resources, with the assistance from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette and other Louisiana universities, to provide an inventory and assessment of coastal forests.

WHEREAS, Louisiana's coastal land loss problem is well known within the state and is gaining recognition across the country as one of the nation's most pressing conservation issues; and

WHEREAS, of recent concern in the state is the conservation and management of privately-owned coastal forests due to their importance in stabilizing soils and providing structural barriers against coastal erosion, in addition to their particular importance to neotropical migratory song birds and colonial wading birds; and

WHEREAS, the United States Congress has responded to the need to conserve and restore wildlife habitat throughout the nation by authorizing and funding numerous conservation incentive programs such as the Conservation and Wetlands Reserve Programs (CRP/WRP); and

WHEREAS, Conservation and Wetlands Reserve Programs are authorized to apply to agricultural lands and therefore are not available to provide incentives to coastal forest owners to preserve their forests or manage them sustainably; and

WHEREAS, considering the dramatic loss of coastal forests to saltwater intrusion and the importance of coastal forests, and individual trees, to the structural integrity of

Louisiana’s coastal wetlands, now popularized as “America’s WETLAND,” it is ironic that an incentive program is not available to secure the conservation of this critical resource.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana memorializes the Congress of the United States to authorize and fund the establishment of a Coastal Forest Reserve Program to provide incentives to coastal forest owners to preserve and sustainably manage their coastal forests as part of the state and national initiative to restore the Mississippi River coastal delta and chenier plain of southwest Louisiana.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana urges and requests the United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service, the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry, and the Louisiana State University School of Renewable Natural Resources, with assistance from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette and other Louisiana universities, to provide an inventory of coastal forests and assess their functional values for the purposes of establishing eligibility and priority ranking for enrollment in a Coastal Forest Reserve Program.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution shall be transmitted to the secretary of the United States Senate and the clerk of the United States House of Representatives, and to each member of the Louisiana delegation to the United States Congress.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution shall be transmitted to the chief of the United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service, the commissioner of the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry, the director of the Louisiana State University School of Renewable Natural Resources, and the president of the University of Louisiana at Lafayette.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES