

108TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. RES. 279

Recognizing the importance and contributions of sportsmen to American society, supporting the traditions and values of sportsmen, and recognizing the many economic benefits associated with outdoor sporting activities.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

DECEMBER 9, 2003

Mr. COLEMAN submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the
Committee on Environment and Public Works

RESOLUTION

Recognizing the importance and contributions of sportsmen to American society, supporting the traditions and values of sportsmen, and recognizing the many economic benefits associated with outdoor sporting activities.

Whereas there are more than 38,000,000 sportsmen in the United States;

Whereas these sportsmen, who come from all walks of life, engage in a sport they love, while helping to stimulate the economy, especially in small, rural communities, and contributing to conservation efforts;

Whereas sportsmen demonstrate values of conservation, appreciation of the outdoors, and love of the natural beauty of the United States;

Whereas sporting activities have both physical and mental health benefits that allow Americans to escape from the fast pace of their lives and to spend time with their families and friends;

Whereas sportsmen pass down their love of the outdoors from generation to generation;

Whereas many sportsmen consider hunting, trapping, and fishing of tremendous importance to the American way of life;

Whereas sportsmen have a passion for learning about nature and have tremendous respect for the game pursued, other sportsmen, the non-hunting populace, and the natural resources upon which they depend;

Whereas the total economic contribution of sportsmen amounts to \$70,000,000,000 annually, with a ripple effect amounting to \$179,000,000,000;

Whereas sportsmen contribute \$1,700,000,000 every year for conservation programs, and these funds constitute a significant portion of on-the-ground wildlife conservation funding;

Whereas anglers support 1,000,000 jobs and small businesses in communities in every part of the United States, and they purchase \$3,200,000,000 in basic fishing equipment every year;

Whereas tens of millions of Americans hunt and are a substantial economic force, spending \$21,000,000,000 every year;

Whereas a sportsman President, Theodore Roosevelt, established America's first National Wildlife Refuge 100 years ago, and with the committed support of sportsmen over the last century, the National Wildlife Refuge System in-

cludes more than 540 refuges spanning 95,000,000 acres throughout all 50 States;

Whereas the funds raised from sportsmen through purchases of Federal migratory bird hunting and conservation stamps under the Act of March 16, 1934 (commonly known as the Duck Stamp Act) (16 U.S.C. 718a et seq.), are used to purchase and restore vital wetlands in the refuge system;

Whereas the sale of those stamps has raised more than \$500,000,000 which has been used to acquire approximately 5,000,000 acres of refuge lands;

Whereas in 1937, Congress passed the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act (16 U.S.C. 669 et seq.), under which sportsmen and the firearms and ammunition industries agreed to a self-imposed 10 percent excise tax on ammunition and firearms, the proceeds of which are distributed to the States for wildlife restoration;

Whereas the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act has created a source of permanent funding for State wildlife agencies that has been used to rebuild and expand the ranges of numerous species, including wild turkey, white-tailed deer, pronghorn antelope, wood duck, beaver, black bear, American elk, bison, desert bighorn sheep, bobcat, and mountain lion, and several non-game species, including bald eagles, sea otters, and numerous song birds;

Whereas in 1950, Congress passed the Dingell-Johnson Sport Fish Restoration Act (16 U.S.C. 777 et seq.), under which recreational anglers and the fishing and tackle manufacturing industries agreed to a self-imposed 10 percent excise tax on sport fishing equipment (including fishing rods, reels, lines, and hooks, artificial lures, baits

and flies, and other fishing supplies and accessories), the proceeds of which are used for the purposes of constructing fish hatcheries, building boat access facilities, promoting fishing, and educating children about aquatic resources and fishing; and

Whereas the Dingell-Johnson Sport Fish Restoration Act was amended in 1984 to extend the excise tax to previously untaxed items of sport fishing equipment and to dedicate a portion of the existing Federal tax on motorboat fuels to those purposes, so that now approximately $\frac{1}{3}$ of the funds expended by State fish and wildlife agencies for maintenance and development of sports fisheries are collected through the use of the excise tax: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) recognizes the importance and contributions
3 of sportsmen to American society;

4 (2) supports the traditions and values of sports-
5 men;

6 (3) supports the many conservation programs
7 implemented by sportsmen;

8 (4) recognizes the many economic benefits asso-
9 ciated with outdoor sporting activities; and

10 (5) recognizes the importance of encouraging
11 the recruitment of, and teaching the traditions of
12 hunting, trapping, and fishing to, future sportsmen.

○