

By Senator Lawson

6-2269-03

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Senate Memorial No. ____

A memorial to the Congress of the United States, urging Congress to enact legislation to halt dredging on the Apalachicola River, to continue authority of the United States Army Corps of Engineers to perform maintenance of the river's navigation channel markings and lock system for recreational boating, and to provide for the restoration and maintenance of fish and wildlife resources and habitats of the Apalachicola River and Apalachicola Bay.

WHEREAS, Florida's Apalachicola River has been designated by the State of Florida as an Outstanding Florida Water, and

WHEREAS, the Apalachicola Bay has been designated by the United States as a National Estuarine Research Reserve and by the United Nations as an International Biosphere Reserve, and

WHEREAS, the Apalachicola River and the Apalachicola Bay are the cornerstones to the economy of six Florida counties and provide thousands of jobs in commercial fishing, recreational fishing, and ecotourism to Floridians, and

WHEREAS, Apalachicola Bay provides nearly 90 percent of Florida's oysters and over 10 percent of the nation's oysters, and

WHEREAS, the health and productivity of the Apalachicola River and the bay into which it flows are dependent upon the amount and quality of water that flows into and out of the river, and

1 WHEREAS, the Apalachicola River has been subject to
2 navigational dredging performed by the United States Army
3 Corps of Engineers that has resulted in environmental harm,
4 including degraded water quality, loss of productive
5 bottomland, loss of hardwood habitat, and damaged fish
6 habitat, and

7 WHEREAS, the dredging of the Apalachicola River is not
8 economically efficient in that the Federal Government spends
9 an estimated \$20 million a year to maintain the river for
10 barge traffic, which amounts to an expenditure of
11 approximately \$30,000 per barge, and

12 WHEREAS, the Senate of the State of Florida finds that
13 the cessation of dredging on the Apalachicola River, the
14 continuation of the authority of the United States Army Corps
15 of Engineers to perform maintenance of the river's navigation
16 channel markings and lock system for recreational boating, and
17 the restoration and maintenance of fish and wildlife resources
18 and habitats of the Apalachicola River and Apalachicola Bay
19 are essential to the continued ecological and economic health
20 and well-being of the region, NOW, THEREFORE,

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22 Be It Resolved by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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24 That the Legislature of the State of Florida urges
25 Congress to enact legislation to halt dredging on the
26 Apalachicola River, to continue the authority of the United
27 States Army Corps of Engineers to perform maintenance of the
28 river's navigation channel markings and lock system for
29 recreational boating, and to provide for the restoration and
30 maintenance of fish and wildlife resources and habitats of the
31 Apalachicola River and Apalachicola Bay.

1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
2 transmitted to the President of the United States, the
3 President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the
4 United States House of Representatives, and to each member of
5 the Florida delegation to the United States Congress.
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