

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 54

BY SENATOR WOMACK AND REPRESENTATIVE RISER

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To memorialize the Congress of the United States to support H.R.1514 and R.S.1078 of the 119th Congress, entitled the "Mississippi River Basin Fishery Commission Act", and to take such actions as are necessary to ensure the state of Louisiana will join the commission as a voting member upon its passage.

WHEREAS, the Mississippi River Basin is the fourth largest watershed in the world and the largest watershed in the nation, draining all or part of thirty-one states and two Canadian provinces, measuring approximately one million two hundred thousand square miles, and covering forty-one percent of the continental United States; and

WHEREAS, management of the inland fishery resources of the Mississippi River Basin is shared by thirty-one states, multiple federal agencies, and two Canadian provinces; and

WHEREAS, the Mississippi River and its tributaries comprise one of the largest and most valuable ecosystems in the world; and

WHEREAS, multiple states, including Louisiana, within the Mississippi River Basin have formed multiple regional interstate partnerships, and one basin-wide partnership, to promote cooperation and communication among the conservation agencies in order to manage the interjurisdictional fishery resources of the basin; and

WHEREAS, twenty-eight Mississippi River Basin state fishery agencies, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, the Bureau of Reclamation, the United States Geological Survey, the Tennessee Valley Authority, the Chippewa-Cree Tribe, and the Chickasaw Nation ratified the Mississippi Interstate Cooperative Resource Agreement in 1990 and formed the Mississippi Interstate Cooperative Resource Association (MICRA) in 1991 to improve the management of interjurisdictional fishery resources in the basin; and

WHEREAS, recognizing the economic, ecologic, and cultural value of the diverse interjurisdictional fishery resources in the Mississippi River Basin and the complexity and severity of issues facing resource management agencies, Congress has acknowledged the

need for the establishment of a Mississippi River Basin Fishery Commission for basin-wide, interagency collaboration in the establishment of shared management objectives, and the collaborative planning, implementation, and evaluation of management actions to provide for the long-term biologic and economic sustainability of interjurisdictional fishery resources in the basin; and

WHEREAS, with long-term sustainability of interjurisdictional fishery resources depending on the control of aquatic invasive species within the Mississippi River Basin, the commission is vital to provide for coordinated, inter-agency, basin-wide management, control, and removal of invasive carps and other prioritized aquatic invasive species within the basin; and

WHEREAS, by consent of Congress, and as directed by federal law under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, 16 U.S.C. 1801 et seq., and the Interjurisdictional Fisheries Act of 1986, 16 U.S.C. 4101 et seq., sustainable fisheries within the United States coastal waters of the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans, the Caribbean Sea, and the Gulf of America have been managed by multi-state commissions and fishery councils for many decades; and

WHEREAS, the interjurisdictional and international fishery resources of the Great Lakes are cooperatively managed by the Great Lakes Fishery Commission, operating through the 1954 Convention on Great Lake Fisheries; and

WHEREAS, the Mississippi River Basin Fishery Commission will improve the management and utilization of sustainable interjurisdictional fishery resources in the Mississippi River Basin through the development of a multi-agency program for the joint management and protection of such fishery resources; and

WHEREAS, in Louisiana, reproducing populations of invasive carp are expanding in both range and numbers within the major rivers of the state, impacting fisheries production and recreation; apple snails are increasing their range and disrupting food chains; giant salvinia, water hyacinth, and other invasive plants are impacting boating and other recreation and modifying aquatic habitat; and other aquatic invasive species are negatively impacting fisheries production and recreation and the economic output and enjoyment that a healthy fishery brings to the state; and

WHEREAS, freshwater fishing provides more than two billion dollars in economic impact to the state of Louisiana.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana hereby memorializes the Congress of the United States to support H.R.1514 and R.S. 1078 of the 119th Congress, entitled the "Mississippi River Basin Fishery Commission Act", and to take such actions as are necessary to ensure the state of Louisiana will join the commission as a voting member upon its passage.

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.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES