

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 896

By Bell

A RESOLUTION to propose an amendment to Article II of the Constitution of the State of Tennessee, to authorize the General Assembly to provide, by general law, a dedicated revenue allocation to be used to protect and conserve forests, fish, wildlife habitats, and state and local parks; conserve lands that protect drinking water sources and the water quality of rivers, lakes, and streams; and to provide opportunities for our children and families to play and enjoy the outdoors.

WHEREAS, the legislature finds that the health and abundance of the State's natural resources of the State of Tennessee are critical to the State's economic health, the quality of life of our citizens, and the future general welfare of our State; and

WHEREAS, these resources are responsible for the creation and sustainability of tens of thousands of jobs and billions of dollars in economic activity across our State; and

WHEREAS, threats to the health and abundance of these natural resources are growing significantly, resulting in negative impacts to local economies, outdoor recreation, and the long-term viability of our lands, water, and wildlife; and

WHEREAS, the health and abundance of these natural resources provides a disproportionate benefit to Tennessee rural economies; and

WHEREAS, existing funding mechanisms and amounts designated to ensure the sound management of our natural resources are inadequate and unsustainable; and

WHEREAS, while all citizens have the right and opportunity to enjoy Tennessee's bountiful natural resources, the overwhelming majority do not contribute financially to the management of such natural resources; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED ELEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that a majority of all the members elected to each house concurring, as shown by the yeas and nays entered on their journals, that it is proposed that Article II of the Constitution of the State of Tennessee be amended by adding the following as a new section:

Section 34. The General Assembly shall provide, by general law, a dedicated portion of the revenue collected by the state sales and use tax, as defined by general law, in the immediately preceding fiscal year for the purposes of protecting and preserving forests, fish, wildlife habitats, and state and local parks; to conserve lands that protect drinking water sources and the water quality of rivers, lakes, and streams; and to provide opportunities for our children and families to play and enjoy the outdoors. The revenues dedicated pursuant to this section shall not lapse.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the foregoing be referred to the One Hundred Twelfth General Assembly and that this resolution proposing such amendment be published in accordance with Article XI, Section 3 of the Constitution of the State of Tennessee.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the clerk of the Senate is directed to deliver a copy of this resolution to the Secretary of State.