

Senate Resolution No. 1122

BY: Senator HINCHEY

COMMEMORATING the 75th Anniversary of the Sportfish Restoration Program as part of the American system of conservation funding

WHEREAS, More than a century ago, hunters and anglers were among the first conservationists who realized America's natural resources were in peril and could not sustain unregulated harvest and habitat destruction; and

WHEREAS, Sportsmen and women took it upon themselves to support laws that stopped excessive harvest of fish and wildlife, established state agencies to protect fish, wildlife, and their habitat, and supported special fishing and hunting license fees to help fund the new agencies' efforts to provide healthy natural resources for future generations; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body recognizes that the primary authority to protect and manage fish within their state waters resides in state agencies; and

WHEREAS, Upon realizing that license fees alone were insufficient to restore and sustain healthy fish populations, anglers supported excise taxes on fishing equipment to raise additional funds to support restoration and enhancement efforts of state agencies; and

WHEREAS, The Sport Fish Restoration Program, which began 75 years ago with the passage of the Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Act in 1950 (further expanded with the Wallop-Breaux amendment to the Sport Fish Restoration Act in 1984) is a vital part of conservation funding in the United States; and

WHEREAS, A manufacturers excise tax on fishing equipment, along with an excise tax on motorboat and small engine fuels, is mostly distributed back to the states through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for fisheries conservation, management, and angler and boater access; and

WHEREAS, This cooperative partnership between the sportfishing industry, anglers, boaters, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and state natural resource agencies has resulted in the most successful model of fisheries management in the world, restoring and enhancing populations across the United States and its territories; and

WHEREAS, Since 1939, the combined contribution of the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Programs and license fees to state fish and wildlife agencies exceeds \$78 Billion-more than any other single conservation effort in American history-which constitute, collectively, the American System of Conservation Funding; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to recognize America's anglers, boaters, the sportfishing industry, state fish and wildlife agencies, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for

their leading role in restoring healthy populations of fish and aquatic resources, both game and non-game, to the abundance we see today with the help of the Sport Fish Restoration Program, in this the 75th anniversary year of the program's establishment as part of the American System of Conservation Funding; and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the Department of Environmental Conservation, all New York State Congressional offices, and local, regional and national media sources so that all may know and appreciate the foresight and contributions from anglers, the sportfishing industry, state fish and wildlife agencies, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on behalf of our Nation's fisheries and aquatic resources.