

House Resolution 119 - Introduced

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 119

BY ISENHART, MOHR, KURTH, STOLTENBERG, DETERMANN,
CROKEN, BRADLEY, MOMMSEN, VONDRAN, OSMUNDSON,
LUNDGREN, and KAUFMANN

1 A Resolution recognizing the 100th anniversary of
2 the establishment of the Upper Mississippi River
3 Wildlife and Fish Refuge.

4 WHEREAS, the Upper Mississippi River National
5 Wildlife and Fish Refuge (Refuge) was created by an
6 Act of Congress 100 years ago on June 7, 1924, to
7 systematically evaluate, manage, and protect the
8 261-mile, 240,000-acre river corridor, from Wabasha,
9 Minnesota, to Princeton, Iowa, including 72 cities and
10 towns; and

11 WHEREAS, the Refuge was the nation's largest
12 environmental investment at the time and was
13 established as the first major project of the Izaak
14 Walton League of America, prompted by a desire to
15 preserve 13,000 acres of wetlands in the Winneshiek
16 Bottoms near Lansing, Iowa; and

17 WHEREAS, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service,
18 nonprofit organizations, federal and state partners,
19 and others work to conserve, protect, and enhance
20 habitat and plant life for use as a breeding ground for
21 migratory birds, fish, and other wildlife; and

22 WHEREAS, the Refuge is home to more than 1,262
23 species, including 300 birds, 50 mammals, 30 reptiles,
24 42 freshwater mussels, and 840 plants, as well as over
25 300 nesting pairs of America's symbol, the bald eagle,
26 after hosting only one breeding pair in 1972; and

1 WHEREAS, the Refuge is designated a Wetland of
2 International Importance by the United Nations and
3 a Globally Important Bird and Biodiversity Area
4 by BirdLife International and the National Audubon
5 Society; and

6 WHEREAS, the Refuge addresses significant ecological
7 challenges, including threats from climate change and
8 invasive species, preserves unique plant species,
9 conserves threatened and endangered species, serves as
10 a layover haven for migratory waterfowl and neotropical
11 birds, restores hardwood forests, and preserves
12 cultural resources; and

13 WHEREAS, the Refuge hosts 3.7 million visitors
14 annually at Yellow River State Forest, Pikes Peak State
15 Park, Mines of Spain Recreation Area, Bellevue State
16 Park, Green Island Wildlife Management Area, Wildcat
17 Den State Park, and other city, county, and state parks
18 and conservation areas; and

19 WHEREAS, the Refuge offers prime recreational
20 opportunities to the public including hunting, fishing,
21 hiking, biking, boating, kayaking, canoeing, wildlife
22 viewing and photography, as well as environmental,
23 historical, and cultural education; and

24 WHEREAS, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service,
25 nonprofit organizations, and state and federal partners
26 work together to conserve and enhance this natural
27 inheritance for the continuing benefit of the American
28 people and future generations; NOW THEREFORE,

29 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, That
30 the House of Representatives declares June 7, 2024,

1 as Upper Mississippi River Wildlife and Fish Refuge
2 Day, encouraging the people of Iowa to gather locally
3 throughout the year for events to celebrate the 100th
4 anniversary.

5 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the House of
6 Representatives encourages educational institutions
7 and public entities to provide critical research, to
8 educate the public, and to engage in collaborative
9 projects related to the Upper Mississippi River,
10 in order to promote human and ecological health, to
11 enhance biodiversity, to protect wildlife habitat and
12 endangered species, and to promote recreational and
13 economic opportunities; and

14 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the House of
15 Representatives encourages the President of the
16 United States, the United States Congress, the Iowa
17 General Assembly, the Governor of Iowa, the U.S.
18 Fish and Wildlife Service, cities, counties, soil and
19 conservation districts, county extension councils, and
20 other public jurisdictions and elected officials to
21 adopt appropriate resolutions, policies, programs, and
22 funding commitments in collaboration with private and
23 nonprofit organizations to secure the integrity of the
24 Upper Mississippi River Wildlife and Fish Refuge for
25 the next 100 years.