

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 11

Senators Shink, Bayer, Polehanki, Cavanagh, Wojno, Geiss, Santana, McCann, Irwin and Cherry offered the following concurrent resolution:

1 A concurrent resolution to urge the United States Congress to
2 designate the Ehlco Area, the Trap Hills, the Norwich Plains, and a
3 2,000-acre addition to the Sturgeon River Gorge Wilderness in
4 Michigan's Upper Peninsula as federal Wilderness.

5 Whereas, The National Wilderness Preservation System,
6 established under the Wilderness Act of 1964, is made up of more
7 than 800 national Wilderness areas that are defined as areas "where
8 the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where
9 man himself is a visitor who does not remain." Federal Wilderness
10 areas are designated by the United States Congress for the use and
11 enjoyment of the American people in such a manner that will leave
12 them unimpaired for their future use and enjoyment as Wilderness

1 areas. It is the highest form of protection of any federal
2 wildland; and

3 Whereas, The Ehlco Area, the Trap Hills, the Norwich Plains,
4 and a 2,000-acre addition to the Sturgeon River Gorge Wilderness
5 together consist of approximately 51,000 acres of federal land in
6 Michigan's Upper Peninsula. Home to numerous types of wildlife,
7 including black bears, white-tailed deer, wolves, beavers, moose,
8 and other native fauna and flora, including rare and endangered
9 species, these natural areas are among the most special, unique,
10 and biodiverse areas within the state of Michigan; and

11 Whereas, The state of Michigan is a champion of environmental
12 stewardship, boasting 16 federal Wilderness areas that cover over
13 291,300 acres. As some of the last areas in the state to meet the
14 criteria for Wilderness designation, the Ehlco Area, the Trap
15 Hills, the Norwich Plains, and the addition to the Sturgeon River
16 Gorge Wilderness deserve the protection afforded to formally
17 designated Wilderness under the Wilderness Act. Designating areas
18 as Wilderness preserves ecosystem diversity, offers robust support
19 to native flora and fauna, and represents the most special land in
20 the State; and

21 Whereas, Designating these four areas as federal Wilderness
22 protects the region from environmental loss or destruction. Such a
23 designation maintains habitats for wildlife and threatened species,
24 protects forests that help to filter and clean the air we breathe,
25 preserves watersheds so local communities can access clean water,
26 and provides recreational opportunities, including hunting and
27 fishing, that support local economies. Without this designation,
28 the land remains open for commercial and other activities that can
29 pollute, deforest, destroy habitats, and harm the land; and

1 Whereas, It is in the long-term environmental, economic, and
2 recreational interests of Michigan's residents that the United
3 States Congress designate the Ehlco Area, the Trap Hills, the
4 Norwich Plains, and the addition to the Sturgeon River Gorge
5 Wilderness as federal Wilderness. These natural areas provide
6 Michigan residents and nonresidents with vast opportunities for
7 hunting, fishing, hiking, wildlife viewing, camping, and other
8 outdoor recreational activities, which are invaluable to Michigan's
9 character and serve as the economic cornerstone of many Michigan
10 communities. Such recreational activities generate 11.2 billion
11 dollars for the state each year and support over 170,000 jobs.
12 Designating land as federal Wilderness helps safeguard the health,
13 happiness, and character of all Michiganders; now, therefore, be it

14 Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives
15 concurring), That we urge the United States Congress to designate
16 the Ehlco Area, the Trap Hills, the Norwich Plains, and a 2,000-
17 acre addition to the Sturgeon River Gorge Wilderness in Michigan's
18 Upper Peninsula as federal Wilderness; and be it further

19 Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the
20 members of the Michigan congressional delegation.