

2015 Regular Session

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 228

BY REPRESENTATIVE ROBERT JOHNSON

CONGRESS: Memorializes congress to reestablish a right-of-way through a wildlife refuge in order to provide access to property owned by the Avoyelles Parish School Board

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

2 To memorialize the United States Congress to take such actions as are necessary to
3 reestablish a right-of-way through the Lake Ophelia National Wildlife Refuge in
4 order to provide access to property owned by the Avoyelles Parish School Board.

5 WHEREAS, Lake Ophelia National Wildlife Refuge, located in Avoyelles Parish and
6 named for its most prominent water body, the 350-acre Lake Ophelia that was at one time
7 a channel of the nearby Red River, was established in 1988 to protect the Mississippi and
8 Red River floodplain ecosystem; and

9 WHEREAS, due to its location in east-central Louisiana, this area is prime waterfowl
10 hunting territory influenced by both the Mississippi and Central Flyways which are the
11 highways in the sky for bringing millions of duck and geese each spring and fall to the area;
12 and

13 WHEREAS, another species found in the Avoyelles Parish area is the Louisiana
14 black bear which was listed as threatened within its historic range of southern Mississippi,
15 Louisiana, and east Texas under the Endangered Species Act on January 7, 1992, due to
16 extensive habitat loss and modification, as well as human-related mortality; and

17 WHEREAS, Louisiana currently supports three core bear populations; the Tensas
18 River Basin population in the north, the upper Atchafalaya River Basin population in central
19 Louisiana, and the coastal population in the southern Atchafalaya River Basin; and

20 WHEREAS, the Black bear management efforts in Louisiana by both the state and
21 the federal agencies have had a great deal of success with a likely result that the central

1 Louisiana and northern Louisiana populations expanding towards each other through the
2 area set aside for the Lake Ophelia National Wildlife Refuge; and

3 WHEREAS, because of the likelihood that the two populations will merge in the
4 area, the Department of the Interior has designated a certain parcel of land in the Lake
5 Ophelia National Wildlife Refuge as a Black bear habitat which in turn has prevented ingress
6 and egress to a six hundred forty acre tract owned by the Avoyelles Parish School Board;
7 and

8 WHEREAS, through the years, this sixteenth-section land owned by the Avoyelles
9 Parish School Board has been available for public hunting, camping, and other recreational
10 activities, activities from which there has been great economic benefit to Avoyelles Parish;
11 and

12 WHEREAS, without these outdoor activities, businesses in Avoyelles Parish that rely
13 on recreational activities in the area including hunting, fishing, and camping for their income
14 have been and will continue to be negatively impacted by the loss of access to the acreage
15 owned by the Avoyelles Parish School Board; and

16 WHEREAS, simply having the Department of the Interior allow a limited right-of-
17 way access to the school board owned land will solve the problem.

18 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby
19 memorialize the United States Congress to take such actions as are necessary to reestablish
20 a right-of-way through the Lake Ophelia National Wildlife Refuge in order to provide access
21 to property owned by the Avoyelles Parish School Board.

22 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the
23 presiding officers of the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Congress of the
24 United States of America and to each member of the Louisiana congressional delegation.

DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

HCR 228 Original

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Robert Johnson

Memorializes the U.S. Congress to take such actions as are necessary to reestablish a right-of-way through the Lake Ophelia National Wildlife Refuge in order to provide access to property owned by the Avoyelles Parish School Board.