

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

# HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 586 Session of  
2013

INTRODUCED BY MCCARTER, COHEN, ROZZI, MILLARD, K. BOYLE, THOMAS,  
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DIGIROLAMO, MCGEEHAN, READSHAW, W. KELLER, KORTZ, HENNESSEY,  
PAINTER, ROSS, ROCK AND WHITE, DECEMBER 16, 2013

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES AND ENERGY,  
DECEMBER 16, 2013

## A RESOLUTION

1 Commemorating the 40th anniversary of the Endangered Species Act  
2 of 1973.

3 WHEREAS, The Endangered Species Act of 1973 (Public Law 93-  
4 205, 16 U.S.C. § 1531 et seq.) has been heralded as one of the  
5 most comprehensive laws ever enacted for the protection of plant  
6 and animal species; and

7 WHEREAS, Prior to the European settlement of the land that  
8 eventually came to be known as the United States, plants and  
9 animals occasionally faced environmental pressures such as  
10 natural disasters or predators that led to their individual and  
11 collective demise; and

12 WHEREAS, As our fledgling country's population grew  
13 exponentially and migrated westward in the 18th and 19th  
14 centuries, the flora and fauna of our great nation faced new  
15 stressors due to human encroachment; and

16 WHEREAS, Species such as the Passenger Pigeon (*Ectopistes*

1 *migratorius*), which had flourished for centuries on our soil,  
2 were decimated as a result of overharvesting and the destruction  
3 of their habitat; and

4 WHEREAS, Sportsmen and conservationists alike began to  
5 recognize that unless Federal legislation was enacted, it was  
6 plausible that future generations would be unable to enjoy the  
7 biological diversity witnessed by our founding fathers; and

8 WHEREAS, Efforts were thereby undertaken at the Federal level  
9 to enact laws, such as the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918,  
10 which were intended to manage and protect certain at-risk  
11 species; and

12 WHEREAS, Although these early laws were beneficial, many felt  
13 that additional regulation was needed to ensure the protection  
14 of a broader spectrum of species that were threatened or in  
15 danger of extinction; and

16 WHEREAS, While the Endangered Species Preservation Act was  
17 signed into law in 1966, since this law was mostly voluntary in  
18 nature, it was deemed ineffective; and

19 WHEREAS, Recognizing that extinction is irreversible,  
20 Congress passed what many consider to be the "bill of rights"  
21 for animals and plants in 1973; and

22 WHEREAS, President Richard Nixon signed this historic  
23 legislation, the Endangered Species Act of 1973, on December 28,  
24 1973; and

25 WHEREAS, In its nearly 40-year history, this act has been  
26 more than 99% effective in preventing the extinction of wildlife  
27 under its protection, while placing hundreds of species on the  
28 path to recovery; and

29 WHEREAS, One of the triumphs of this landmark legislation is  
30 the recovery of the American alligator (*Alligator*

1   *mississippiensis*) population from the brink of extinction; and

2       WHEREAS, The American alligator population has rebounded so  
3   dramatically over the last several decades that it is currently  
4   harvested for its meat and skin in the southeastern United  
5   States; and

6       WHEREAS, Our nation's symbol, the Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus*  
7   *leucocephalus*), has also been a beneficiary of protections  
8   afforded by the Endangered Species Act of 1973; and

9       WHEREAS, While success stories exist, there are still  
10   approximately 1,300 species on the endangered list throughout  
11   our country according to the United States Environmental  
12   Protection Agency; and

13       WHEREAS, The act has been instrumental in stabilizing  
14   populations of species at risk, preventing the extinction of  
15   many others and conserving the habitats upon which they depend;  
16   therefore be it

17       RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives commemorate the  
18   40th anniversary of the Endangered Species Act of 1973.