SENATE BILL 937

M1 1lr2983

By: Senator Dyson

Introduced and read first time: February 25, 2011

Assigned to: Rules

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

Natural Resources Police Force - Number of Officers

FOR the purpose of stating the intent of the General Assembly that the Natural Resources Police Force employ a certain number of Natural Resources police officers by a certain date; requiring the Governor to include certain amounts in the annual budget bills for certain fiscal years to make certain progress toward achieving a certain employment goal; and generally relating to the Natural Resources Police Force.

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- 10 Article Natural Resources
- 11 Section 1–201.2
- 12 Annotated Code of Maryland
- 13 (2005 Replacement Volume and 2010 Supplement)

14 Preamble

WHEREAS, Chapter 367 of the Acts of 2010 demonstrated the intent of the General Assembly to strengthen enforcement of the State's conservation laws consistent with the public trust doctrine, which affirms government's responsibility to administer, protect, manage, and conserve fish and wildlife for the benefit of the public; and

WHEREAS, The lingering economic recession has resulted in a historic reduction in financial support from the General Fund to the Natural Resources Police Force, resulting in fewer Natural Resources police officers in the field and on the waterways and more frequent violation of the State's conservation laws; and

WHEREAS, Since 1990, there has been a 50% decrease in the number of Natural Resources police officers in the State; and



- WHEREAS, The intent of this Act is to increase the number of Natural Resource police officers employed by the Natural Resources Police Force to at least 435 officers within the next 10 years, with due regard to the dictates of fiscal practicality, to safeguard the State's legacy of protecting natural resources for the benefit of future generations; now, therefore,
- 6 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

Article - Natural Resources

9 **1–201.2.**

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- 10 (A) IT IS THE INTENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY THAT THE NATURAL RESOURCES POLICE FORCE EMPLOY AT LEAST 435 NATURAL RESOURCES POLICE OFFICERS BY FISCAL YEAR 2021.
- 13 (B) THE GOVERNOR SHALL INCLUDE IN EACH ANNUAL BUDGET BILL
 14 BEGINNING IN FISCAL YEAR 2013 AND ENDING IN FISCAL YEAR 2021 AMOUNTS
 15 SUFFICIENT TO MAKE INCREMENTAL PROGRESS TOWARD ACHIEVING THE
 16 EMPLOYMENT GOAL FOR THE NATURAL RESOURCES POLICE FORCE STATED IN
 17 SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS SECTION.
- SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July 1, 2011.