

HOUSE BILL 215

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3lr1902
CF SB 208

By: **Delegate Cane**

Introduced and read first time: January 21, 2013

Assigned to: Environmental Matters

Reassigned: Environmental Matters and Appropriations, January 28, 2013

Committee Report: Favorable with amendments

House action: Adopted

Read second time: March 20, 2013

CHAPTER _____

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Natural Resources Police Force – Number of Officers**

3 FOR the purpose of stating the intent of the General Assembly that the ~~Natural~~
4 ~~Resources Police Force~~ Governor include certain funding in the State budget in
5 a certain manner to employ a certain number of certain Natural Resources
6 police officers ~~by a certain date; authorizing under certain circumstances,~~
7 ~~beginning in a certain fiscal year and continuing each subsequent year, the~~
8 ~~Natural Resources Police Force to increase the number of cadets and recruits~~
9 ~~enrolling in the Maryland Natural Resources Police Academy until the size of~~
10 ~~the force is sufficient to meet a certain mission of the Department; requiring the~~
11 ~~Natural Resources Police Force to provide certain reports to the General~~
12 ~~Assembly on or before certain dates; and generally relating to the staffing of the~~
13 Natural Resources Police Force.

14 BY adding to

15 Article – Natural Resources
16 Section 1–201.2
17 Annotated Code of Maryland
18 (2012 Replacement Volume)

19 Preamble

20 WHEREAS, Chapter 367 of the Acts of 2010 demonstrated the intent of the
21 General Assembly to strengthen enforcement of the State’s conservation laws

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

Underlining indicates amendments to bill.

~~Strike out~~ indicates matter stricken from the bill by amendment or deleted from the law by amendment.



1 consistent with the public trust doctrine, which affirms government's responsibility to
 2 administer, protect, manage, and conserve fish and wildlife for the benefit of the
 3 public; and

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

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

10 WHEREAS, The intent of this Act is to increase the number of Natural
 11 Resource police officers employed by the Natural Resources Police Force ~~to at least 435~~
 12 ~~officers within the next 10 years~~, with due regard to the dictates of fiscal practicality,
 13 to safeguard the State's legacy of protecting natural resources for the benefit of future
 14 generations; now, therefore,

15 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
 16 MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

17 **Article – Natural Resources**

18 **1-201.2.**

19 IT IS THE INTENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY THAT THE GOVERNOR
 20 INCLUDE AN APPROPRIATE LEVEL OF FUNDING IN THE STATE BUDGET, ON A
 21 PHASED-IN BASIS, TO EMPLOY ADDITIONAL NATURAL RESOURCES POLICE
 22 OFFICERS TO ACHIEVE THE FOLLOWING STAFFING LEVELS:

23 (1) AT LEAST 291 FULL-TIME OFFICERS TO MEET THE
 24 YEAR-ROUND WORKLOAD OF THE DEPARTMENT; AND

25 (2) AT LEAST 33 CONTRACTUAL SEASONAL OFFICERS TO MEET
 26 THE SEASONAL WORKLOAD DEMAND IN STATE PARKS.

27 ~~(A) IT IS THE INTENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY THAT THE NATURAL~~
 28 ~~RESOURCES POLICE FORCE EMPLOY AT LEAST 435 NATURAL RESOURCES~~
 29 ~~POLICE OFFICERS BY FISCAL YEAR 2023.~~

30 ~~(B) (1) TO THE EXTENT THAT FUNDS ARE AVAILABLE AS BUDGET~~
 31 ~~CONDITIONS IMPROVE IN THE STATE, BEGINNING IN FISCAL YEAR 2015 AND~~
 32 ~~CONTINUING IN EACH SUBSEQUENT YEAR, THE NATURAL RESOURCES POLICE~~
 33 ~~FORCE MAY INCREASE THE NUMBER OF CADETS AND RECRUITS ENROLLING IN~~

1 ~~THE MARYLAND NATURAL RESOURCES POLICE ACADEMY UNTIL THE SIZE OF~~
2 ~~THE FORCE IS SUFFICIENT TO MEET THE MISSION OF THE DEPARTMENT.~~

3 ~~(2) ON OR BEFORE JUNE 30, 2014, AND EACH JUNE 30~~
4 ~~THEREAFTER UNTIL JUNE 30, 2023, THE NATURAL RESOURCES POLICE FORCE~~
5 ~~SHALL REPORT TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 2-1246~~
6 ~~OF THE STATE GOVERNMENT ARTICLE, ON THE PROGRESS THE POLICE FORCE~~
7 ~~HAS MADE IN ACHIEVING THE GOAL OF EMPLOYING NATURAL RESOURCES~~
8 ~~POLICE OFFICERS ESTABLISHED UNDER THIS SECTION.~~

9 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
10 July 1, 2013.

Approved:

Governor.

Speaker of the House of Delegates.

President of the Senate.