

HOUSE BILL 215

M1

3lr1902
CF SB 208

By: **Delegate Cane**

Introduced and read first time: January 21, 2013

Assigned to: Environmental Matters

A BILL ENTITLED

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 employ a certain number of Natural Resources police
5 officers by a certain date; authorizing under certain circumstances, beginning in
6 a certain fiscal year and continuing each subsequent year, the Natural
7 Resources Police Force to increase the number of cadets and recruits enrolling
8 in the Maryland Natural Resources Police Academy until the size of the force is
9 sufficient to meet a certain mission of the Department; requiring the Natural
10 Resources Police Force to provide certain reports to the General Assembly on or
11 before certain dates; and generally relating to the Natural Resources Police
12 Force.

13 BY adding to
14 Article – Natural Resources
15 Section 1–201.2
16 Annotated Code of Maryland
17 (2012 Replacement Volume)

18 Preamble

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

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

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



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

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

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

10 **Article – Natural Resources**

11 **1–201.2.**

12 **(A) IT IS THE INTENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY THAT THE NATURAL**
13 **RESOURCES POLICE FORCE EMPLOY AT LEAST 435 NATURAL RESOURCES**
14 **POLICE OFFICERS BY FISCAL YEAR 2023.**

15 **(B) (1) TO THE EXTENT THAT FUNDS ARE AVAILABLE AS BUDGET**
16 **CONDITIONS IMPROVE IN THE STATE, BEGINNING IN FISCAL YEAR 2015 AND**
17 **CONTINUING IN EACH SUBSEQUENT YEAR, THE NATURAL RESOURCES POLICE**
18 **FORCE MAY INCREASE THE NUMBER OF CADETS AND RECRUITS ENROLLING IN**
19 **THE MARYLAND NATURAL RESOURCES POLICE ACADEMY UNTIL THE SIZE OF**
20 **THE FORCE IS SUFFICIENT TO MEET THE MISSION OF THE DEPARTMENT.**

21 **(2) ON OR BEFORE JUNE 30, 2014, AND EACH JUNE 30**
22 **THEREAFTER UNTIL JUNE 30, 2023, THE NATURAL RESOURCES POLICE FORCE**
23 **SHALL REPORT TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 2–1246**
24 **OF THE STATE GOVERNMENT ARTICLE, ON THE PROGRESS THE POLICE FORCE**
25 **HAS MADE IN ACHIEVING THE GOAL OF EMPLOYING NATURAL RESOURCES**
26 **POLICE OFFICERS ESTABLISHED UNDER THIS SECTION.**

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