House Resolution 1279

By: Representatives Powell of the 32nd, McCall of the 33rd, Burns of the 159th, Rogers of the 10th, Watson of the 166th, and others

A RESOLUTION

Encouraging the development of a water management plan for the Savannah River Basin; and for other purposes.

WHEREAS, the Georgia and South Carolina legislatures have formed a Joint State Water Caucus to encourage and provide political support for an ongoing bi-state program of optimizing the management of shared water resources in the Savannah River Basin (SRB); and

WHEREAS, the development of a long-term sustainable management plan can only be achieved by close cooperation among state and federal legislatures and resource agencies; and

WHEREAS, the United States Army Corps of Engineers, as managers of these shared water resources, along with applicable state agencies, is conducting a comprehensive study of the impact of recent droughts in order to determine what improvements to the SRB Drought Contingency Plan should be implemented; and

WHEREAS, technology is currently available to enhance the collection, availability, and use of real-time water quality and quantity data throughout the SRB; and

WHEREAS, unpredictable climate changes create a higher risk of compounding negative impacts and continue to make it more difficult and costly to manage the SRB ecosystem based solely on static historical data rule curves with Broad River inflow data; and

WHEREAS, increased flexibility and learning when creating, adapting, and executing management plans and policies will be critical as managers face and react to current and future challenges to the effective, efficient, and sustainable use of water resources.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that the Joint State Water Caucus hereby encourages the appropriate agencies of Georgia and South Carolina, along with the United States Army Corps of Engineers, as part of the current study, to explore, develop, assess, and implement a flexible, adaptive water management program for the SRB that utilizes real-time data and applies lessons learned during recent droughts to define the most practical and conservative reservoir storage rules based on actual conditions and real-time data, with the ultimate objective being an ongoing program that ensures continuous optimization of water quality and quantity management while also considering the economic impact of the lake and river levels to the communities throughout the entire Savannah River Basin.