



Introduced Version

**HOUSE CONCURRENT
RESOLUTION No. _____**

DIGEST OF INTRODUCED RESOLUTION

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION urging the federal government to use sound science when determining the water level requirements of Lake Shafer and Lake Freeman.

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_____, read first time and referred to Committee on

20152835

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HC 1084/DI 84



HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION urging the federal government to use sound science when determining the water level requirements of Lake Shafer and Lake Freeman.

Whereas, Over several decades, tourism to the Twin Lakes area has grown to the point where the area has become one of the major tourist attractions in Indiana;

Whereas, Tourists come to the area to visit one or all of our four major attractions: Indiana Beach, Lake Shafer, Lake Freeman, and the Madam Carroll cruise boat on Lake Freeman;

Whereas, During the two week low water period in August 2014 tourism was noticeably weaker;

Whereas, There are 869 licensed properties on the Lake Freeman, with more than half of these used as second homes owned by people whose primary homes are in Indianapolis, Chicago, or other places hours away;

Whereas, Occupancy of these homes was noticeably down for the duration of the lake drop in water level, depriving Lake Freeman and area businesses of tourist revenue from food, gas, and services;

Whereas, A large tourism infrastructure of resorts, motels, private home rentals, boat ramps, marinas, restaurants, and docking facilities has become established on both Lake Freeman and Lake Shafer, all dependent upon the



expectation of consistent water levels;

Whereas, Very little attention has been paid to the fact that great numbers of supposedly nonendangered fish, mussels, and plant life in Lake Freeman were destroyed by the required two foot drop in Lake Freeman in August 2014;

Whereas, Although the required lowering of the lake water level may have saved endangered mussels in the Tippecanoe River, it also produced other environmental problems of a serious nature in Lake Freeman. These problems included the exposure of the lake bottom, resulting in the death of nonendangered mussels and other aquatic life; wildlife and water plants were killed, giving off offensive odors and visual impairments; fish spawning and habitat areas in low and wetland areas were lost; constructed and placed fish habitat promulgation structures were uncovered; the beneficial functions of wetlands as habitat and water filters were diminished; docks and piers designed for specific water levels were rendered inaccessible for boating and suffered damage; seawalls buckled because of lack of countering pressure from the water, causing more silt to enter the lake; and stumps and shallows appeared, rendering boating unsafe;

Whereas, Closure of all Lake Freeman boat ramps because of low water levels caused loss of ramp launch fee income and many marina workers were laid off;

Whereas, Low water levels also prevented the construction of seawalls, docks, and boat lifts, resulting in construction worker layoffs; and

Whereas, The economic value of Lake Shafer and Lake Freeman is immeasurable to the area: Therefore,

*Be it resolved by the House of Representatives
of the General Assembly of the State of Indiana,
the Senate concurring:*

1 SECTION 1. That the Indiana General Assembly supports
2 community businesses and urges the federal government to give strong
3 deference to the fiscal impact on local economies when determining a
4 change is needed to the water levels of Lake Shafer and Lake Freeman.



1 SECTION 2. That the Principal Clerk of the House of
2 Representatives transmit a copy of this resolution to each member of
3 the Indiana Congressional Delegation.

