

1 SJR40  
2 138187-1  
3 By Senators Whatley and Dial  
4 RFD:  
5 First Read: 28-FEB-12

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8 URGING CONGRESS TO REAUTHORIZE THE CONSERVATION  
9 TITLE OF THE UNITED STATES FARM BILL.  
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11 WHEREAS, deliberations needed to re-authorize the  
12 Farm Bill in 2012 will be particularly difficult given the  
13 need to reduce federal government spending, and we believe,  
14 however, that the proposal made by the leadership of the House  
15 and Senate Agriculture Committees in the Budget Control Act  
16 process demonstrates that the Conservation Title can continue  
17 to meet vital national needs while sharing in budget  
18 reductions; and

19 WHEREAS, landowners, farmers, ranchers, forest  
20 managers, agricultural and forest businesses, hunters and  
21 anglers, local and state government officials, and nonprofit  
22 organizations representing a wide range of interests, can  
23 attest that, without any doubt, the programs within the  
24 Conservation Title work cost-effectively to serve the short-  
25 and long-term interests of the American people; and

26 WHEREAS, the Conservation Title programs recognize  
27 that the health of America's soil, water, and other natural

1 resources is essential to the long-term productivity and  
2 economic viability of agriculture and forestry, that  
3 protecting and managing our natural resources is critical to  
4 the future of American communities, and that most of our  
5 nation's opportunities for hunting, fishing, and observing  
6 nature depend upon privately owned habitat on farms, ranches,  
7 and forest land. The Conservation Title programs help to  
8 protect these resources in a uniquely successful way by  
9 funding a variety of voluntary partnerships and cooperative  
10 conservation efforts between the U.S. Department of  
11 Agriculture and private landowners. These conservation  
12 programs are essential to the sustainability of U.S.  
13 agriculture and forestry and to meeting the growing demand for  
14 food and fiber at home and abroad; and

15 WHEREAS, while America has become a more urban  
16 nation, agriculture, forestry, and outdoor recreation continue  
17 to be essential to America's economy, and according to the  
18 United States Department of Agriculture, farm and farm-related  
19 employment includes about 24 million jobs. Estimates by the  
20 American Forest and Paper Association are that forest  
21 management and forest dependent industries account for  
22 approximately five percent of the total U.S. manufacturing  
23 GDP, produce about \$175 billion in products annually, and  
24 employ nearly 900,000 people; and

25 WHEREAS, A study by United States Fish and Wildlife  
26 Service finds that hunting, angling, and wildlife-dependent  
27 recreation contribute \$122 billion annually to our national

1 economy. Much of this economic activity is located in rural  
2 areas where these activities are vital to local economies.  
3 Natural resources-based products represent a significant  
4 proportion of the export sector so essential to our economic  
5 health. Indeed, U.S. agricultural exports exceeded \$137  
6 billion and accounted for a \$42 billion farm trade surplus in  
7 2011, one of the few bright spots in the American economy last  
8 year; and

9 WHEREAS, the Farm Bill programs fund voluntary  
10 agreements between the USDA, nongovernmental organizations and  
11 farmers, ranchers, and foresters to keep their land in  
12 agriculture and forestry, to preserve natural habitat in rural  
13 landscapes, to save the productivity and economic value of  
14 soil and water, and to assist in the management of  
15 agricultural and forest lands. The result is real conservation  
16 with multiple benefits for every region of America, not the  
17 least of these is helping landowners to stay on the land as  
18 stewards of America's legacy of natural resources; now  
19 therefore,

20 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA, BOTH  
21 HOUSES THEREOF CONCURRING, That by copy of this resolution to  
22 each member of the Alabama Congressional delegation, we urge  
23 each of you to vote to reauthorize the Farm Bill in a manner  
24 that sustains the integrity and effectiveness of the  
25 Conservation Title and maintains conservation funding that  
26 meets our national needs.