

HOUSE RESEARCH

Bill Summary

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Overview

Memorial resolutions are used by the Minnesota Legislature to exhort other government officials or government bodies to act on a particular subject. A memorial resolution follows the same procedure as a bill, except that the resolution is not presented to the governor.

This resolution urges the Congress to enact a \$3 increase in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness reservation fee. This resolution also urges the federal government to work with the state to seek a permanent solution that allows the state to fulfill its constitutional obligation with respect to the school trust fund land that is within the borders of the Boundary Waters Canoe Wilderness Area.

The school trust lands were granted to Minnesota by the federal government when Minnesota joined the Union in 1858. The lands were given for the "benefit of the schools." Much of the land (the 16th and 36th townships) was sold by the state in the late 18th century. The proceeds from those sales were placed in the permanent school fund. The state has roughly 2.5 million acres of school trust land remaining which is managed by the Department of Natural Resources. Approximately 93,000 acres of school trust fund land are within the borders of the Boundary Waters Canoe Wilderness Area. The proceeds of managed lands (timber sales, lakeshore leases and mineral rights, along with interest earnings from the permanent school fund) are annually appropriated to Minnesota's schools. These appropriations total about \$20 million per year.

The Legislative Auditor's Office prepared a detailed study of school trust lands in March of 1998. More information is available in that report, which can be accessed online at:

<http://www.auditor.leg.state.mn.us/ped/1998/pe9805.htm>