

HOUSE COMMEMORATION NO. 1020

Introduced by: Representatives Otten (Herman), Anderson, Bartels, Bartling, Beal, Clark, Conzet, Dennert, Diedrich, DiSanto, Goodwin, Gosch, Hawley, Heinemann, Holmes, Hunhoff, Jensen (Kevin), Johns, Kaiser, Lake, Latterell, Lesmeister, Lust, Marty, McCleerey, Mickelson, Mills, Peterson (Kent), Pischke, Qualm, Rhoden, Rozum, Schaefer, Schoenfish, Steinhauer, Turbiville, Wiese, Willadsen, and Zikmund and Senators Otten (Ernie), Bolin, Cammack, Frerichs, Greenfield (Brock), Heinert, Kennedy, Klumb, Kolbeck, Langer, Monroe, Novstrup, Partridge, Stalzer, Sutton, Wiik, and Youngberg

A LEGISLATIVE COMMEMORATION, Commending the Department of Game, Fish and Parks and the landowners of South Dakota on thirty years of partnership to provide public hunting access through the Walk-In Area program.

WHEREAS, the Walk-In Area program began in 1988 leasing public hunting access from 26 landowners on 23,161 acres, and has grown to partnering with 1,458 landowners, in 2017, who provide public hunting access to 1,239,580 acres of private land; and

WHEREAS, cumulatively over the last thirty years the Walk-In Area program has paid landowners over \$35 million to provide public hunting access opportunities to over 23.2 million acres; and

WHEREAS, the Walk-In Area program plays a critical role in enhancing local economies across the state as hunters spend an estimated \$15.9 million per year for the purposes of hunting on Walk-In Areas; and

WHEREAS, forty percent of hunters annually utilize Walk-In Areas for their annual hunting experiences and opportunities; and

WHEREAS, the Walk-In Area program has been a valuable asset in the efforts to retain, recruit, and reactivate hunters; and



WHEREAS, the Walk-In Area program has been an integral part of preserving South Dakota's hunting heritage:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT COMMEMORATED, by the Ninety-Third Legislature of the State of South Dakota, that the Legislature recognizes and honors the Department of Game, Fish and Parks' Walk-In Area program for successfully providing public hunting access through partnerships with South Dakota landowners for the past thirty years.