

1 State of Arkansas
2 88th General Assembly
3 Regular Session, 2011

SR 21

4
5 By: Senator Files

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7 **SENATE RESOLUTION**

8 TO ENCOURAGE THE ARKANSAS CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION TO
9 SUPPORT THE MAINTENANCE, FUNDING, AND COMPLETION OF
10 THE TWELVE-FOOT CHANNEL ON THE ARKANSAS RIVER.

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13 **Subtitle**

14 TO ENCOURAGE THE ARKANSAS CONGRESSIONAL
15 DELEGATION TO SUPPORT THE MAINTENANCE,
16 FUNDING, AND COMPLETION OF THE TWELVE-
17 FOOT CHANNEL ON THE ARKANSAS RIVER.

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19 WHEREAS, Public Law 108-137, Section 136 of the Energy and Water
20 Development Appropriations Act of 2004 authorized a 12-foot Channel on the
21 Arkansas River;

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23 WHEREAS, the Record of Decision was signed on September 27, 2005, by
24 Major General Don T. Riley after a multi-year study; and

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26 WHEREAS, initial funding of \$7,000,000 was appropriated in 2005
27 specifically for the 12-foot channel, marking the beginning of ongoing
28 construction of the channel; and

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30 WHEREAS, the Arkansas River Navigation System is the Mississippi
31 River's southernmost major tributary. The Lower Mississippi River and the
32 Gulf Intracoastal Waterway already have navigation depths of twelve or more
33 feet. For the State of Arkansas to remain a significant exporter of
34 agricultural goods, it must have the capability to fully load barges; and

35
36 WHEREAS, the opportunity to gain an additional three (3) feet of draft



1 and a forty-three percent (43%) increase in cargo capacity per barge for an
2 only slightly greater total cost is an unusual opportunity to improve the
3 efficiency of the national transportation system; and
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5 WHEREAS, currently many barges in the Arkansas River are light-loaded
6 for the presently maintained nine-foot Arkansas River channel. Each foot of
7 draft represents approximately one hundred seventy-seven (177) acres of
8 soybeans and therefore gaining three (3) feet of draft on a fifteen-barge tow
9 equals an additional 7,965 acres of soybeans that can be moved with the same
10 equipment and very little extra fuel; and
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12 WHEREAS, the Arkansas River has an estimated capacity of thirty-five to
13 forty-five million tons per year but the 2010 tonnage was less than eleven
14 and one-half million. The restrictive nine-foot channel is preventing
15 growth; and
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17 WHEREAS, commodities from ports and terminals located along the
18 Arkansas River are shipped to and received from ports throughout the inland
19 navigation system and foreign ports worldwide by way of New Orleans; and
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21 WHEREAS, the twelve-foot channel on the Arkansas River would make
22 Arkansas farmers and factories low-cost producers in world markets through
23 lower transportation costs; and
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25 WHEREAS, the Corps of Engineers' latest surveys indicate that the
26 Arkansas portion of the Arkansas River already has a navigation depth of
27 twelve (12) or more feet. If the Arkansas portion was maintained at a depth
28 of twelve feet, the State of Arkansas could advertise that Arkansas has a
29 year-round, dependable twelve-foot navigation channel which would enable the
30 state to be competitive in attracting new industries and jobs and help
31 prevent the loss of industries and current jobs,
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33 NOW THEREFORE,

34 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE EIGHTY-EIGHTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE
35 STATE OF ARKANSAS:
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1 THAT the Senate encourages Congress and the Arkansas Congressional
2 Delegation to support the maintenance, funding, and completion of the twelve-
3 foot channel on the Arkansas River.

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5 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT upon adoption of this resolution the
6 Secretary of the Senate shall transmit a copy to the Speaker of the United
7 States House of Representatives, the President of the United States Senate,
8 and to all the members of the Arkansas Congressional Delegation with the
9 request that this resolution be officially entered in the Congressional
10 Record.

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