

118TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. RES. 788

Recognizing the 50th Anniversary of Carroll County Wabash & Erie Canal,
Inc.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JULY 31, 2024

Mr. BRAUN (for himself and Mr. YOUNG) submitted the following resolution;
which was considered and agreed to

RESOLUTION

Recognizing the 50th Anniversary of Carroll County Wabash
& Erie Canal, Inc.

Whereas, following the success of the Erie Canal in the State
of New York, the leaders of the State of Indiana had a
dream of digging a statewide network of canals;

Whereas, in 1836, the General Assembly of the State of Indiana passed “An Act to provide for a general system of Internal Improvements”(commonly known as “the Internal Improvements Act of 1836” or the “Indiana Mammoth Internal Improvement Act”), which appropriated millions of dollars for canal building and other improvements that launched the State of Indiana into the Canal Era;

Whereas only 2 canal lines were successfully completed in the
State of Indiana, including—

(1) the 101-mile Whitewater Canal from Hagerstown, Indiana, to Cincinnati, Ohio; and

(2) the 468-mile Wabash & Erie Canal from Toledo, Ohio, to Evansville, Indiana, on the Ohio River;

Whereas the Wabash & Erie Canal economically and culturally connected the State of Indiana to the rest of the United States through the Erie Canal and other canal networks;

Whereas, at 468 miles in length, the Wabash & Erie Canal was the largest fabricated structure in the United States when it was completed in 1853 and, as of 2024, is the second-longest canal in the world;

Whereas, to appreciate the impact that the Wabash & Erie Canal had on the population of the State of Indiana, consider that, when the Wabash & Erie Canal began operations, the State of Indiana had a population of 350,000, and by 1840, it had a population of 988,000;

Whereas, in 1835, the counties in the State of Indiana that bordered the Wabash & Erie Canal boasted 12,000 inhabitants and, by 1850, the number of inhabitants was 150,000;

Whereas, in the 3 years following the opening of the Wabash & Erie Canal, 5 new counties were created along the route of the Wabash & Erie Canal from Fort Wayne, Indiana, to Huntington, Indiana;

Whereas, in the 1870s, the Wabash & Erie Canal closed due to the high cost of maintenance and low income amidst competition from railroads;

Whereas, after the Wabash & Erie Canal closed, the canal section in Delphi, Indiana, was left to decay, becoming a festering public hazard and eyesore;

Whereas, in February 1971, the very first meeting of the dozen people concerned with forming a Canal history group, later known as Carroll County Wabash & Erie Canal, Inc., was held in Carroll County, Indiana;

Whereas, in 1974, the Internal Revenue Service granted non-profit status under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to Carroll County Wabash & Erie Canal, Inc.;

Whereas Carroll County Wabash & Erie Canal, Inc., has invested thousands of hours to repair the Wabash & Erie Canal and surrounding areas to represent its former glory and to educate the public of its history;

Whereas, in 2003, the Wabash & Erie Canal Interpretive Center opened, and, thanks to volunteer labor, community donations, and grant funding, offers an interactive museum, a reception hall for community events, and a research archive of canal history;

Whereas Carroll County Wabash & Erie Canal, Inc., has developed and maintained miles of trails along historic sites of Delphi, Indiana, for public enjoyment and recreation;

Whereas the volunteers of Carroll County Wabash & Erie Canal, Inc., restored and relocated several historic bridges to span the Wabash & Erie Canal, including the wrought iron 1874 Paint Creek Bridge;

Whereas, since 2009, Carroll County Wabash & Erie Canal, Inc., has offered public canal boat tours aboard a 54-foot replica canal boat named, “the Delphi”;

Whereas the volunteers of Carroll County Wabash & Erie Canal, Inc., built an open-air 1850s canal-era village by relocating and restoring historic structures from around the State of Indiana; and

Whereas, besides 1 full-time executive director and limited part-time staff, the rest of Carroll County Wabash & Erie Canal, Inc., and its activities and programs are staffed by local volunteers: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) celebrates the Wabash & Erie Canal as a
3 historic landmark that preserves the story of the
4 canal systems of the United States and their impor-
5 tance to early settlers for future generations;

6 (2) recognizes the prominent role that the Wa-
7 bash & Erie Canal, the second-largest canal in the
8 world as of 2024, had in the growth and expansion
9 of the United States, especially in the Midwest and
10 in the State of Indiana;

11 (3) recognizes Carroll County Wabash & Erie
12 Canal, Inc., for its extensive community efforts to
13 preserve the Wabash & Erie Canal while offering
14 educational and recreational services to the public;
15 and

16 (4) commemorates the 50th anniversary of Car-
17 roll County Wabash & Erie Canal, Inc., that was
18 founded to preserve canal history and make it pos-
19 sible for visitors to enjoy the natural beauty of the
20 last remaining navigable section of the Wabash &
21 Erie Canal in the State of Indiana.

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