INTRODUCED BY ADOLPH, BARRAR, CIVERA, RAYMOND, BAKER, FAIRCHILD, BELFANTI, BISHOP, CAPPELLI, COSTA, CREIGHTON, CRUZ, DALLY, DeLUCA, DeWEESE, DiGIROLAMO, GEIST, GEORGE, HARHAI, HARPER, HENNESSEY, HERSHEY, HUTCHINSON, JAMES, W. KELLER, KOTIK, LEVDANSKY, MANN, MARKOSEK, MARSICO, McILHATTAN, MELIO, MICOZZIE, MUNDY, PHILLIPS, PRESTON, READSHAW, REED, RUBLEY, SANTONI, SCHRODER, SOLOBAY, STABACK, STERN, R. STEVENSON, TANGRETTI, THOMAS, WALKO, WATSON, WOJNAROSKI, YEWCIC, YOUNGBLOOD AND MARSHALL, APRIL 24, 2007

INTRODUCED AS NONCONTROVERSIAL RESOLUTION UNDER RULE 35, APRIL 24, 2007

A RESOLUTION

1 Designating the month of May 2007 as "Watershed Awareness Month" in Pennsylvania.

2 WHEREAS, The land, rivers, streams, lakes, wetlands and groundwater resources of this Commonwealth are interconnected to form a rich mosaic of watersheds; and

3 WHEREAS, These treasured water resources provide citizens with clean drinking water and recreational and business opportunities; and

4 WHEREAS, This Commonwealth contains more than 83,000 miles of rivers and streams; and

5 WHEREAS, There are eight distinct river basins in Pennsylvania, including Lake Erie, Ohio River, Genesee River (Lake Ontario), Susquehanna, Delaware, Potomac, Elk and Northeast/Gunpowder; and

6 WHEREAS,
WHEREAS, There are 104 watersheds, the basic building blocks of the natural environment, in this Commonwealth; and
WHEREAS, More than 13,400 miles of streams and rivers in Pennsylvania are so impaired that they do not meet current water quality standards; and
WHEREAS, The Commonwealth invests enormous resources to restore and protect water, including the remediation of polluted water from 180,000 acres of abandoned coal mines and the more than 2 billion tons of coal refuse which contaminates more than 6,200 miles of streams and associated groundwater; and
WHEREAS, Abandoned mines, coal refuse and their associated polluted water discharges are the main reason contaminated streams do not meet water quality standards; and
WHEREAS, The Congress of the United States last year reauthorized the Abandoned Mine Reclamation Fund fee to help provide Pennsylvania with an estimated $1.4 billion in Federal funding over the next 15 years to reclaim abandoned mines and treat abandoned mine drainage; and
WHEREAS, The Pennsylvania AML Campaign, made up of watershed and environmental groups, the coal industry, conservation districts, state and local governments and many others, lobbied tirelessly for action on the Abandoned Mine Reclamation Fund fee; and
WHEREAS, The Commonwealth is committed to a watershed approach to resource management where concerned community members come together as watershed guardians to address and resolve problems; and
WHEREAS, The Commonwealth empowers and assists local watershed organizations working in partnership as watershed guardians to resolve or remediate current water quality and
1 water quantity problems within watershed boundaries; and
2     WHEREAS, This watershed approach to environmental protection
3 leads to cleaner rivers and streams, safer drinking water and
4 greater protection of aquatic wildlife habitats; and
5     WHEREAS, There are more than 400 active watershed groups in
6 this Commonwealth, and new watershed groups are forming
7 continuously; and
8     WHEREAS, Watershed groups have reclaimed more than 5,000
9 acres of abandoned mines, planted more than 1,500 miles of
10 stream buffers and created or restored more than 3,000 acres of
11 wetlands since 1999; and
12     WHEREAS, More than 11,000 citizens are actively engaged in
13 monitoring water quality throughout this Commonwealth, in
14 particular more than 2,500 volunteers in 52 counties covered by
15 local chapters of the Pennsylvania Senior Environment Corps; and
16     WHEREAS, Local watershed groups are a cost-effective
17 investment in environmental cleanup for the Commonwealth: for
18 every $1 invested by the Commonwealth, watershed groups have
19 matched it with $1.25 of their own funds, more than doubling the
20 Commonwealth's investment; and
21     WHEREAS, Educational forums connecting adults and children to
22 their watersheds, including the land, water and people,
23 ultimately provide long-term protection for these important and
24 valuable water resources; and
25     WHEREAS, The Commonwealth recognizes and celebrates the
26 efforts of hardworking volunteers within watershed groups who
27 improve their communities today and for future generations;
28 therefore be it
29     RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives designate the
30 month of May 2007 as "Watershed Awareness Month" in
Pennsylvania; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the theme "Reclaiming Abandoned Mines to Reclaim Pennsylvania's Waterways" celebrate the success of the effort to reauthorize the Federal Abandoned Mine Reclamation Fund fee and the steps taken by the Pennsylvania AML Campaign, Federal and state governments and watershed groups throughout this Commonwealth to address Pennsylvania's number one threat to clean water.