

Reps. Lauwers, Cochran, Kelly and LaVoy offered the following resolution:

House Resolution No. 353

A resolution to declare Clay Township the Sturgeon Angling Capital of Michigan.

Whereas, By far more sturgeon angling occurs in the North and Middle channels of the St. Clair River within the political boundaries of Clay Township than anywhere else in Michigan. Though other areas of the state are open to catch and immediate release sturgeon fishing, populations are too small to make sturgeon a viable target species in most watersheds. In a few other areas where some harvest is allowed, regulations severely restrict the seasons. Most sturgeon fishing in the St. Clair River occurs in the North Channel which is almost entirely within the boundaries of Clay Township; and

Whereas, The waters of the St. Clair River within Clay Township have the longest and most active harvest seasons for lake sturgeon in Michigan for non-stocked waters with natural reproduction. The harvest season in the waters of the St. Clair River in Clay Township runs from July 16th until the end of September. Catch and immediate release angling continues until the end of November; and

Whereas, More sturgeon fishing permits are issued to anglers in the greater Detroit metro area including Wayne, Macomb, St. Clair and Oakland counties with the vast majority issued in Macomb and St. Clair Counties. Those anglers fish almost exclusively within the Clay Township waters of the North Channel of the St. Clair River; and

Whereas, The waters of the North Channel of the St. Clair River within the boundaries of Clay Township support the only commercial charter boat fishery for lake sturgeon in the State of Michigan; and

Whereas, More tagged sturgeon are reported to the Department of Natural Resources and more Lake Sturgeon Management Cooperator patches are issued to anglers fishing the Clay Township waters of the St. Clair River than to anglers fishing anywhere else in the State of Michigan; and

Whereas, A vast majority of lake sturgeon recorded in the Michigan DNR master angler program are taken from Clay Township waters of the North Channel of the St. Clair River. A search of the records for the last 5 years shows that 63 of 67 entries came from the St. Clair River and Lake St. Clair; and

Whereas, Michigan's only sturgeon, and most unique fishing tournament, the North Channel Sturgeon Classic is held fully within the Clay Township waters of the North Channel of the St. Clair River. There were more than 33 fish caught by anglers during the tournament in 2015; and

Whereas, National Geographic Television filmed a sturgeon angling segment on the Clay Township waters of the North Channel of the St. Clair which aired in 2009 and several times thereafter as part of the Monster Fish Series. Michigan Out of Doors Television has done several sturgeon angling segments over the last several years for the television show. All of these trips have taken place in the Clay Township waters of the North Channel of the St. Clair River; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That the members of this legislative body declare Clay Township the Sturgeon Angling Capital of Michigan; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to Clay Township, St. Clair County, Michigan Department of Natural Resources, organizers of the North Channel Sturgeon Classic, and the Michigan United Conservation Clubs.