

CHAPTER 186**(HJR 41)**

A JOINT RESOLUTION directing the Department of Revenue and the University of Kentucky's Department of Forestry and Natural Resources to recommend equitable property tax assessment procedures for well-managed forests.

WHEREAS, well-managed, family-owned, non-industrial forests are central to providing the raw material that fuels the \$13 billion in economic contributions from the forest industry sector annually; and

WHEREAS, incentivizing family forest owners, who own the majority of the forestlands in Kentucky, to conduct sound forest practices will help sustain the socio-economic benefits that forest resources provide to Kentucky; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to House Concurrent Resolution 13 of the 2002 Regular Session of the General Assembly, the Legislative Research Commission issued Research Report No. 307, which identified tax and related policies that had the effect of incentivizing or disincentivizing good forest management practices in the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, the examination of property tax issues impacting forest management practices in Research Report No. 307 produced conflicting views on how to equitably and constitutionally assess property taxes on well-managed forestlands; and

WHEREAS, this lack of agreement and failure to act upon the report's most important findings resulted in continued poor forest management of many forestlands in the Commonwealth and the potential unconstitutional taxation of forestlands where sound forest management practices were being implemented; and

WHEREAS, significant developments have occurred since the issuance of Research Report No. 307 that would be helpful in finding the best policies for improving the productivity of Kentucky's forests, including the availability of a nationally-recognized standard that could be used by property valuation administrators to define well-managed forests;

NOW, THEREFORE,

Be it resolved by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky:

➔Section 1. The Department of Revenue and the University of Kentucky's Department of Forestry and Natural Resources shall coordinate together to submit a report to the Legislative Research Commission no later than December 1, 2022, detailing their recommendations for establishing property tax assessment procedures for well-managed forests that ensure equitable taxation of these lands and encourage sound forest management practices that will promote the sustainability of Kentucky's forests and maximize the socioeconomic benefits derived from them.

Signed by Governor April 8, 2022.