



General Assembly

**Senate Joint
Resolution No. 4**

February Session, 2016

LCO No. 1034



Referred to Committee on ENVIRONMENT

Introduced by:
(ENV)

**RESOLUTION MEMORIALIZING THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS
TO PERMANENTLY PRESERVE PLUM ISLAND AS A NATIONAL
WILDLIFE REFUGE.**

Resolved by this Assembly:

1 WHEREAS, Plum Island is a nationally significant natural, cultural,
2 and historic resource;

3 WHEREAS, Plum Island has been designated as part of the Long
4 Island Sound Stewardship System under the authority of the federal
5 Clean Water Act, demonstrating the governmental and public interest
6 in the conservation of the undeveloped natural resources of the island;

7 WHEREAS, the Long Island Sound Stewardship Initiative Atlas
8 identifies Plum Island as an exemplary colonial waterbird habitat,
9 including sites that are of national significance;

10 WHEREAS, the ecological value of Plum Island's habitats have been
11 acknowledged by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service through
12 its designation of Plum Island as one of the Northeast Coastal Areas
13 Study Significant Coastal Habitat sites, a designation that identifies

14 Plum Island as a habitat and area of natural diversity in need of
15 protection in southern New England;

16 WHEREAS, Plum Island has also been recognized as an important
17 coastal resource pursuant to the federal Coastal Barrier Resources Act,
18 and is included within the Coastal Barrier Resources System;

19 WHEREAS, eighty per cent of Plum Island remains in a natural
20 state of undeveloped fields, forests, wetlands and shoreline habitats;

21 WHEREAS, Plum Island provides essential habitat to more than
22 two hundred migratory, overwintering, breeding or resident
23 songbirds, waterbirds or birds of prey, including, but not limited to,
24 the rare bank swallow, osprey, federally endangered roseate tern and
25 the federally threatened piping plover;

26 WHEREAS, Plum Island supports the largest winter haul-out site
27 for seals in southern New England;

28 WHEREAS, Plum Island has significant natural communities and
29 plant species, including an extensive wooded freshwater wetland in
30 the southwestern section of the island and a maritime dune
31 community, which collectively provide habitat for a number of rare
32 and endangered plant species, including such rare plants as seabeach
33 and slender knotweed, blackjack oak and spring ladies' tresses;

34 WHEREAS, Plum Island's waters are filled with a wide variety of
35 species, including numerous fish, the endangered North Atlantic Right
36 Whale, sea turtles and other marine life;

37 WHEREAS, Plum Island's waters provide unique opportunities for
38 recreational fishing, sailing and charter boat activities;

39 WHEREAS, the disposal of federal property has led to the creation
40 of national wildlife refuges like Nomans Land Island National Wildlife
41 Refuge in coastal Massachusetts and Ninigret, Sachuest Point and
42 Block Island National Wildlife Refuges in coastal Rhode Island.

43 WHEREAS, the proposed sale of the undeveloped portions of Plum
44 Island by the United States Department of Homeland Security and the
45 United States General Services Administration is inconsistent with the
46 traditional process of federal property disposition;

47 WHEREAS, the proposed sale of the undeveloped portions of Plum
48 Island is inconsistent with the well-established effort by state and local
49 governments in and around Long Island Sound to acquire and protect
50 stewardship sites possessing ecological, environmental, cultural,
51 historic, recreational and scenic value;

52 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Connecticut
53 General Assembly calls upon the Congress of the United States to
54 protect the public's interest in assuring Plum Island's and Long Island
55 Sound's economic, environmental, historic and cultural value through
56 the permanent preservation of their habitats and wildlife by repealing
57 those provisions of Public Law 110-329 and Public Law 112-74 that
58 require the sale of Plum Island and by designating Plum Island as a
59 National Wildlife Refuge; and

60 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the clerks of the Senate and
61 House cause copies of this resolution to be sent to each member of the
62 Connecticut congressional delegation.