

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HJM 4034

*As Passed House
February 14, 1992*

Brief Description: Seeking federal funds for operations and improvements for Mitchell act hatchery facilities.

Sponsor(s): Representatives R. King, Basich and Orr.

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Fisheries & Wildlife, February 7, 1992, DP;
Passed House, February 14, 1992, 92-0.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
FISHERIES & WILDLIFE**

Majority Report: *Do pass.* Signed by 11 members:
Representatives R. King, Chair; Morris, Vice Chair; Wilson,
Ranking Minority Member; Fuhrman, Assistant Ranking Minority
Member; Basich; G. Cole; Haugen; Hochstatter; Orr; Padden;
and Spanel.

Staff: Keitlyn Watson (786-7310).

Background: The Department of Fisheries operates 41 salmon hatcheries in the state. The operation and maintenance of the hatcheries in the Columbia River Basin are contingent on federal funding. The Mitchell Act was passed by Congress to compensate for the progressive decline of Columbia River Basin salmonid resources due to destruction of favorable environmental conditions by hydropower development. The operation of these hatcheries is contingent on an annual congressional appropriation.

The effect of hatchery-produced fish on wild fish is becoming increasingly controversial. Hatchery coho salmon, for example, have become so introgressed with wild Lower Columbia River coho that the National Marine Fisheries Service, upon review of an endangered species petition for this stock, declared it extinct. New roles for hatcheries, such as wild stock supplementation and captive broodstock rearing for wild stock enhancement, may be appropriate.

Summary of Bill: The Legislature prays that the president and Congress appropriate sufficient funds during the upcoming session to adequately fund operations and capital

improvements for Mitchell Act facilities from which hatchery salmon do not negatively impact wild salmon stocks in the states of Washington and Oregon.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: Hatcheries have been underfunded for many years. This funding is badly needed.

Testimony Against: None.

Witnesses: Ed Manary, Department of Fisheries (in favor).