

**SENATE RESOLUTION
1998-8710**

By Senators Strannigan, Anderson, Finkbeiner, Haugen, Thibaudeau, Heavey, Kohl and Wood

WHEREAS, The Washington State Senate recognizes that the fabric of this state's identity is positively enhanced by the protected presence of gray whales and other marine mammals that ply Washington waters near our major urban centers; and

WHEREAS, The protected gray whale population in Washington waters provides priceless aesthetic and recreational benefits for countless Washington citizens and visitors as well as substantial economic benefit to the state and its tourism industry; and

WHEREAS, The protected presence of our year-round resident gray whale population allows the whale-watching industry to educate thousands of visitors each year about the wonders of these nomadic creatures and other marine mammals that annually migrate to their Northwest home in our state waters; and

WHEREAS, The hunting of gray whales could cause significant personal safety concerns for tourists who come to Washington for the purpose of whale watching and to others attracted to our state for non-consumptive marine activities such as sailing, diving, sea kayaking and other activities; and

WHEREAS, Many citizens, visitors, businesses and international groups who annually contribute significantly to the economic viability of Washington's tourism industry have expressed their objection to a resumption of hunting for gray whales; and

WHEREAS, A resumed gray whale hunt may have profound negative impacts on the ecology of the Olympic Peninsula, causing gray whales to avoid the region and setting international precedents that pose a potential threat to the last remaining population of gray whales;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Washington State Senate formally recognize the social, economic and environmental benefits of the current protection gray whales enjoy in Washington waters; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Washington State Senate recognize that the current cessation in whale hunting makes Washington waters a unique and important sanctuary for these magnificent marine mammals; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Washington State Senate will always be a vigilant advocate for the health of the state's resident gray whale population and will watch over this precious resource to protect and preserve it from human harm so that it may be a lasting heritage for future generations.

I, Mike O'Connell, Secretary of the Senate,
do hereby certify that this is a true and
correct copy of Senate Resolution 1998-8710,
adopted by the Senate March 12, 1998.

MIKE O'CONNELL
Secretary of the Senate