
HOUSE JOINT MEMORIAL 4001

State of Washington

66th Legislature

2019 Regular Session

By Representatives Walsh and Irwin

Read first time 01/17/19. Referred to Committee on Rural Development, Agriculture, & Natural Resources.

1 TO THE HONORABLE DONALD J. TRUMP, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,
2 AND TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE AND THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF
3 REPRESENTATIVES, AND TO THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF
4 THE UNITED STATES, IN CONGRESS ASSEMBLED, AND TO THE NATIONAL OCEANIC
5 AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION:

6 We, your Memorialists, the Senate and House of Representatives of
7 the State of Washington, in legislative session assembled,
8 respectfully represent and petition as follows:

9 WHEREAS, Sea lion predation is a significant threat to already
10 critically endangered and threatened salmon stocks in Washington and
11 throughout the Pacific Northwest; and

12 WHEREAS, Although sea lion populations were once near depletion,
13 the species has dramatically rebounded in recent decades; and

14 WHEREAS, Since 1983, the United States California sea lion
15 population, which resides on the Pacific coast of the United States
16 and ranges from British Columbia, Canada, to Baja California, Mexico,
17 has grown at an estimated 6.2 percent per year; and

18 WHEREAS, A stock assessment report prepared by the National
19 Oceanic and Atmospheric Association Fisheries Division, most recently
20 revised in 2015, estimates that the total United States population of
21 California sea lions is 296,750 animals; and

22 WHEREAS, The Columbia River Basin has seen an almost one-third
23 increase of California lions in recent years, from seven-hundred

1 fifty animals in 2013 to two thousand three hundred forty in 2015;
2 and

3 WHEREAS, The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association
4 Fisheries Division has calculated that an optimum sustainable
5 population could be maintained while removing nine thousand two
6 hundred California sea lions from the stock per year. However, a
7 small fraction of that number, only about three hundred eighty-nine
8 animals, are removed annually; and

9 WHEREAS, Congress recently adopted changes to the Marine Mammal
10 Protection Act to marginally increase allowable California sea lion
11 removals by states and Tribes in parts of the Columbia River and its
12 tributaries; and

13 WHEREAS, The state of Washington still lacks effective tools to
14 manage the constant threat of quickly growing sea lion populations to
15 the precious salmon stocks of the Pacific Northwest; and

16 WHEREAS, In the early twentieth century, the state of Washington
17 along with other states offered a bounty on sea lions of three
18 dollars per sea lion, which proved to be an effective tool to reduce
19 sea lion populations;

20 NOW, THEREFORE, Your Memorialists respectfully pray that Congress
21 amend further the Marine Mammal Protection Act to allow the use of
22 hunting or bounty programs as tools to effectively manage populations
23 of predatory sea lions.

24 BE IT RESOLVED, That copies of this Memorial be immediately
25 transmitted to the Honorable Donald J. Trump, President of the United
26 States, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the
27 President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the House of
28 Representatives, and each member of Congress from the State of
29 Washington.

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