

JAN 18 2008

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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO THE STATE MAMMAL.

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:**

1           SECTION 1. The Hawaiian monk seal (*Monachus schauinslandi*)  
2 is the only marine mammal whose entire species range lies within  
3 the United States. It is one of only two endemic mammals found  
4 in Hawaii.

5           On November 23, 1976, it was listed as an endangered  
6 species pursuant to the Endangered Species Act and it remains  
7 listed as endangered today. The population of the Hawaiian monk  
8 seal has been in a twenty-year constant decline and today there  
9 are approximately only twelve hundred remaining. The majority  
10 of this population is in the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands,  
11 while there are an estimated eighty individuals living in the  
12 main Hawaiian Islands.

13           In 1979, the legislature designated the humpback whale as  
14 the official marine mammal of the State. Part of the purpose  
15 for doing so was to increase awareness about the humpback whale,  
16 which was on the brink of extinction in the sixties. As a  
17 result of an increase in awareness regarding the humpback whale,



1 its numbers have markedly increased. A purpose in designating  
 2 the Hawaiian monk seal as the official state mammal is to raise  
 3 awareness of it as an endangered species with the hope that this  
 4 awareness will, like the humpback whale, result in increased  
 5 protection and its repopulation.

6 The purpose of this Act is to recognize the importance and  
 7 uniqueness of the Hawaiian monk seal to the Hawaiian Islands by  
 8 establishing and designating the Hawaiian monk seal as the  
 9 official state mammal.

10 SECTION 2. Chapter 5, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended  
 11 by adding a new section to be appropriately designated and to  
 12 read as follows:

13 "§5- State mammal. The Hawaiian monk seal (Monachus  
 14 schauinslandi) is established and designated as the official  
 15 mammal of the State."

16 SECTION 3. New statutory material is underscored.

17 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2008.

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INTRODUCED BY: Jim

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**Report Title:**

Hawaiian Monk Seal; State Mammal

**Description:**

Designates the Hawaiian monk seal as the state mammal.

