

MAR 18 2009

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

URGING THE STATE OF HAWAII TO RECOGNIZE THE THIRD SATURDAY OF EVERY APRIL AS "HAWAIIAN MONK SEAL DAY" AND TO COORDINATE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOVERY PLAN FOR THE HAWAIIAN MONK SEAL WITH THE FEDERAL AND COUNTY GOVERNMENTS.

1 WHEREAS, the Hawaiian monk seal, *monachus schauinslandi*, is
2 endemic to the Hawaiian islands and known to native Hawaiians as
3 *ilio-holo-i-ka-uaua*, or "dog running in rough waters"; and
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5 WHEREAS, the Hawaiian monk seal is one of the world's most
6 critically endangered marine mammals and the nation's most
7 endangered endemic marine mammal; and
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9 WHEREAS, the Hawaiian monk seal was designated Hawaii's
10 official state mammal on July 1, 2008, by Act 72, Session Laws
11 of Hawaii 2008; and
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13 WHEREAS, the Hawaiian monk seal, as a species, is 13
14 million years old; older than the islands of Maui and Hawaii;
15 and
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17 WHEREAS, less than 1,200 Hawaiian monk seals remain in the
18 Hawaiian archipelago; and
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20 WHEREAS, the Hawaiian monk seal may be the last of its
21 genus to survive because the Caribbean monk seal was last
22 sighted in the late 1950s and officially declared extinct in
23 June 2008, and the Mediterranean monk seal has declined to the
24 small population of approximately 500; and
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26 WHEREAS, human and environmental factors such as habitat
27 loss, competition for food supply, marine debris entanglement,



1 disease, shark predation, and climate change have contributed to
2 the species decline; and

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4 WHEREAS, Hawaiian monk seals are protected by the federal
5 Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) and the federal Endangered
6 Species Act (ESA), which listed the Hawaiian monk seal as
7 endangered in 1976; and

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9 WHEREAS, the MMA and ESA protect the species and the
10 ecosystems on which they depend, and make harming, harassing,
11 taking, or killing these animals subject to fines of up to
12 \$50,000; and

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14 WHEREAS, most of the Hawaiian monk seal population exists
15 in the Northwest Hawaiian Islands where the seal population is
16 rapidly declining at the rate of four percent per year; and

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18 WHEREAS, the population of Hawaiian monk seals found in the
19 main Hawaiian islands is increasing slightly from its current
20 population estimated at between 100 and 150; and

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22 WHEREAS, the Recovery Plan for the Hawaiian Monk Seal
23 (*monachus schauinslandi*), Second Revision, (Recovery Plan) was
24 approved by the National Marine Fisheries Service of the
25 National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) in August
26 2007; and

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28 WHEREAS, the Recovery Plan includes the need for public
29 education and outreach to develop best practices for humans to
30 enable the seals to survive; and

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32 WHEREAS, Earth Day, which is a recognition of the
33 importance of earth's biodiversity, is celebrated in the month
34 of April; and

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36 WHEREAS, every third Saturday of April is the day NOAA
37 conducts a statewide monk seal count; now, therefore,

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39 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-fifth
40 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2009, the
41 House of Representatives concurring, that the State of Hawaii



1 designate the third Saturday of every April as "Hawaiian Monk
2 Seal Day" to coincide with NOAA's statewide annual monk seal
3 count; and
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5 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this day be designated as a day
6 to educate residents and visitors about how to protect this
7 critically endangered species; and
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9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Land and
10 Natural Resources coordinate with the county governments and
11 NOAA to implement the Recovery Plan; and
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13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
14 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Governor,
15 Chairperson of the Board of Natural Resources, mayors of the
16 counties, chairpersons of the county councils, and Administrator
17 of NOAA.
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OFFERED BY:

