
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 seas"; 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 thirteen
14 million years old, older than the islands of Maui and Hawaii;
15 and
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17 WHEREAS, fewer than twelve hundred Hawaiian monk seals
18 remain in the 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 1950s and officially declared extinct in June
23 2008, and the Mediterranean monk seal has declined to the small
24 population of approximately five hundred; and
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26 WHEREAS, human and environmental factors such as habitat
27 loss, competition for food supply, marine debris entanglement,
28 disease, shark predation, and climate change have contributed to
29 the species decline; and
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1 WHEREAS, Hawaiian monk seals are protected by the federal
2 Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972, P.L. 93-205, as amended
3 (MMPA) and the federal Endangered Species Act of 1973, P.L. 95-
4 522, as amended (ESA), which listed the Hawaiian monk seal as
5 endangered in 1976; and

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

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

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16 WHEREAS, the population of Hawaiian monk seals found in the
17 main Hawaiian islands is increasing slightly from its current
18 population estimated at between one hundred and one hundred
19 fifty monk seals; and

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

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

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

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

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38 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-fifth
39 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2009, the
40 House of Representatives concurring, that the State of Hawaii is
41 urged to designate the third Saturday of every April as
42 "Hawaiian Monk Seal Day" to coincide with NOAA's statewide semi-
43 annual monk seal count; and

1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this day be designated as a day
2 to educate residents and visitors about how to protect this
3 critically endangered species; and
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5 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Land and
6 Natural Resources coordinate with the county governments and
7 NOAA to implement the Recovery Plan; and
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9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
10 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Governor,
11 Chairperson of the Board of Land and Natural Resources, mayors
12 of the counties, chairpersons of the county councils, and
13 Administrator of NOAA.