

**A-Engrossed**  
**House Joint Memorial 17**

Ordered by the House April 22  
Including House Amendments dated April 22

Sponsored by Representatives HUNT, KENNEMER

**SUMMARY**

The following summary is not prepared by the sponsors of the measure and is not a part of the body thereof subject to consideration by the Legislative Assembly. It is an editor's brief statement of the essential features of the measure.

*[Urges United States Secretary of Commerce to approve immediate removal of California sea lions from Columbia River as means of protecting salmon and steelhead that are threatened or endangered.]*

**Urges United States Congress to undertake recommended revisions to federal Marine Mammal Protection Act that allow for regulation of pinniped predation on threatened and endangered salmonids and to approve immediate removal of California sea lions in Columbia River and other Oregon rivers during salmon runs.**

**JOINT MEMORIAL**

1  
2 To the Senate and the House of Representatives of the United States of America, in Congress as-  
3 sembled:

4 We, your memorialists, the Seventy-sixth Legislative Assembly of the State of Oregon, in legis-  
5 lative session assembled, respectfully represent as follows:

6 Whereas some 13 populations of fish are listed as threatened or endangered species under the  
7 Endangered Species Act of 1973; and

8 Whereas California sea lions are having a significant negative impact on the recovery of many  
9 salmon and steelhead populations in the Pacific Northwest; and

10 Whereas California sea lions have been protected since 1972 by the federal Marine Mammal  
11 Protection Act; and

12 Whereas populations of California sea lions have remained unchecked and have grown from  
13 10,000 in the 1950s to about 300,000 currently, and that population increase has been reflected in  
14 growing numbers of California sea lions occurring in the Pacific Northwest; and

15 Whereas substantial opportunities for human interaction exist for recreational and sport  
16 anglers, and significant safety concerns related to these interactions are escalating each year; and

17 Whereas California sea lion foraging areas have expanded to Bonneville Dam and throughout  
18 the Willamette River up to Willamette Falls; and

19 Whereas while in the Columbia River and other Oregon rivers, the California sea lion forage  
20 base is primarily salmon, resulting in a conservatively estimated take of more than 25,000 salmon  
21 each year; and

22 Whereas growing, healthy and robust West Coast pinniped populations are increasing, as are  
23 their predation levels on threatened and endangered salmonids in many areas; and

24 Whereas the Oregon State Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Washington Department of Fish  
25 and Wildlife and the Idaho Department of Fish and Game, in cooperation with the National Oceanic

**NOTE:** Matter in **boldfaced** type in an amended section is new; matter *[italic and bracketed]* is existing law to be omitted. New sections are in **boldfaced** type.

1 and Atmospheric Administration's National Marine Fisheries Service and the United States Army  
2 Corps of Engineers, have performed extensive research to document and track this growing problem  
3 and conducted years of tests and programs to reduce the number of California sea lions and their  
4 predation rates, which have had limited success; and

5       Whereas all reasonable and known nonlethal means of removal have been tried; and

6       Whereas the Oregon State Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Washington Department of Fish  
7 and Wildlife and the Idaho Department of Fish and Game have concluded that additional removal  
8 options are necessary to gain control of the California sea lion situation, reduce the risk of in-  
9 creasing the predation losses and reduce safety concerns related to human interaction; and

10       Whereas the Oregon State Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Washington Department of Fish  
11 and Wildlife and the Idaho Department of Fish and Game appealed to the National Oceanic and  
12 Atmospheric Administration's National Marine Fisheries Service for authorization to remove known  
13 predatory California sea lions foraging in the Columbia River; and

14       Whereas the State of Oregon also worked with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric  
15 Administration's National Marine Fisheries Service in the late 1990s, as directed by Congress under  
16 the 1994 amendments to the federal Marine Mammal Protection Act, to study, evaluate, and report  
17 to Congress on the negative impacts of pinniped predation on West Coast salmonids; and

18       Whereas the Oregon State Department of Fish and Wildlife worked with the National Oceanic  
19 and Atmospheric Administration's National Marine Fisheries Service to prepare a report on these  
20 problems to Congress in 1999 and make recommendations for an amendment to the federal Marine  
21 Mammal Protection Act that could help management agencies address these predation problems; and

22       Whereas the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Marine Fisheries  
23 Service 1999 report was submitted to Congress more than a decade ago and Congress has taken no  
24 action to date to acknowledge the work of the states and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric  
25 Administration's National Marine Fisheries Service by adopting the recommendations that Congress  
26 asked for and received in the report; now, therefore,

27 **Be It Resolved by the Legislative Assembly of the State of Oregon:**

28       That we, the members of the Seventy-sixth Legislative Assembly, respectfully request and  
29 strongly urge Congress to undertake the revisions to the federal Marine Mammal Protection Act  
30 recommended in the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Marine Fisheries  
31 Service 1999 report submitted to Congress to help state and federal fish and wildlife management  
32 agencies with the growing problem of pinniped predation on threatened and endangered salmonids  
33 in inland waters by providing new management options and tools not currently provided in the fed-  
34 eral Marine Mammal Protection Act and to approve the immediate removal by any means necessary  
35 of California sea lions in the Columbia River and other Oregon rivers during salmon runs; and be  
36 it further

37       Resolved, That a copy of this memorial shall be sent to the United States Secretary of Com-  
38 merce and to each member of the Oregon Congressional Delegation.

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