

MAR 18 2009

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## SENATE RESOLUTION

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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  
8

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  
12

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  
16

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  
25

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 (MMPA) and the federal Endangered  
3 Species Act (ESA), which listed the Hawaiian monk seal as  
4 endangered in 1976; and

5  
6 WHEREAS, the MMA and ESA protect the species and the  
7 ecosystems on which they depend, and make harming, harassing,  
8 taking, or killing these animals subject to fines of up to  
9 \$50,000; and

10  
11 WHEREAS, most of the Hawaiian monk seal population exists  
12 in the Northwest Hawaiian Islands where the seal population is  
13 rapidly declining at the rate of four percent per year; and

14  
15 WHEREAS, the population of Hawaiian monk seals found in the  
16 main Hawaiian islands is increasing slightly from its current  
17 population estimated at between 100 and 150; and

18  
19 WHEREAS, the Recovery Plan for the Hawaiian Monk Seal  
20 (*monachus schauinslandi*), Second Revision, (Recovery Plan) was  
21 approved by the National Marine Fisheries Service of the  
22 National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) in August  
23 2007; and

24  
25 WHEREAS, the Recovery Plan includes the need for public  
26 education and outreach to develop best practices for humans to  
27 enable the seals to survive; and

28  
29 WHEREAS, Earth Day, which is a recognition of the  
30 importance of earth's biodiversity, is celebrated in the month  
31 of April; and

32  
33 WHEREAS, every third Saturday of April is the day NOAA  
34 conducts a statewide monk seal count; now, therefore,

35  
36 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-fifth  
37 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2009,  
38 that the State of Hawaii designate the third Saturday of every  
39 April as "Hawaiian Monk Seal Day" to coincide with NOAA's  
40 statewide annual monk seal count; and  
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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  
4

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 Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, Chairperson of the  
11 Board of Natural Resources, mayors of the counties, chairpersons  
12 of the county councils, and Administrator of NOAA.  
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OFFERED BY:



