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Referred: Rules

1 IN THE HOUSE

BY HERRMANN

2

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 11

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IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

4

FOURTEENTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

5

Relating to the Interim Convention on

6

Conservation of North Pacific Fur Seals.

7 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:

8 WHEREAS the Interim Convention on Conservation of North Pacific Fur
9 Seals between the United States, Japan, Canada, and the U.S.S.R. is now
10 before the United States Senate for ratification; and

11 WHEREAS, since the fur seal treaty has been in effect, the fur seal
12 population has increased from 300,000 in 1911 to well over 1.2 million; and

13 WHEREAS the fur seal treaty, the fur seal harvest, and the welfare of
14 the Pribilof Aleut people are inextricably tied together in very complex
15 ways, both culturally and economically; and

16 WHEREAS the fur seal harvest on the Pribilof Islands has been taking
17 place since the late 1700's; and

18 WHEREAS the fur seal harvest remains the main source of income for the
19 residents of the Pribilof Islands while efforts are made to diversify the
20 local economy; and

21 WHEREAS the fur seal harvest is no longer subsidized by the federal
22 government and will be conducted privately on a self-supporting basis; and

23 WHEREAS reputable scientists agree the fur seals are not an endangered
24 species; and

25 WHEREAS the treaty provides for a carefully studied, scientifically
26 controlled harvest of two-year old subadult nonbreeding males only; and

27 WHEREAS there is no scientific evidence to indicate the current level
28 of the commercial harvest of subadult male seals contributes to any decline
29 in the fur seal population, but to the contrary, evidence suggests that

1 culling subadult males contributes to the overall health of the fur seal
2 herd; and

3 WHEREAS cooperative and strengthened research, education, management
4 and enforcement programs are the keys to the conservation of the North
5 Pacific fur seal and these activities can best be carried out through the
6 fur seal treaty; and

7 WHEREAS the National Audubon Society, a respected conservation organi-
8 zation with more than a half-million members, has endorsed the renewal of
9 the fur seal treaty; and

10 WHEREAS a national campaign, featuring misleading and inaccurate
11 information, has been launched by various wildlife groups to convince the
12 United States Senate to reject the treaty; and

13 WHEREAS a hearing before the Foreign Relations Committee will afford
14 the representatives of the Pribilof Islands an opportunity to refute the
15 misleading charges made by the treaty opponents, and to present, under
16 oath, substantiated, scientific information in support of the continuation
17 of the fur seal treaty; and

18 WHEREAS not to provide for a fair hearing on this issue would be
19 disastrous for the Aleut people and would open the way for special interest
20 groups to attack other essential subsistence activities, such as trapping,
21 whaling, and fishing;

22 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives that the United States
23 Senate Committee on Foreign Relations is respectfully requested to hold
24 prompt hearings on the Interim Convention on Conservation of North Pacific
25 Fur Seals; and be it

26 FURTHER RESOLVED that the United States Senate is respectfully re-
27 quested to ratify the Interim Convention on Conservation of North Pacific
28 Fur Seals.

29 COPIES of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable George Bush,

1 Vice-President of the United States and President of the U.S. Senate; to
2 the Honorable Robert Dole, Majority Leader of the Senate; to the Honorable
3 Richard G. Lugar, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations;
4 and to the Honorable Ted Stevens and the Honorable Frank Murkowski, U.S.
5 Senators, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.