

109TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. CON. RES. 441

Expressing the sense of Congress regarding the regrettable votes cast by certain Caribbean countries for a resumption of commercial whaling at the 58th annual International Whaling Commission meeting in St. Kitts in June 2006.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 29, 2006

Mr. DEFAZIO (for himself, Mr. RAHALL, and Mr. GILCHREST) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on International Relations, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of Congress regarding the regrettable votes cast by certain Caribbean countries for a resumption of commercial whaling at the 58th annual International Whaling Commission meeting in St. Kitts in June 2006.

Whereas whales have very low reproductive rates, which makes many whale species extremely vulnerable to pressure from whaling, and many whale species were hunted to near extinction by the commercial whaling industry;

Whereas whales migrate throughout the world's oceans, and international cooperation is required to successfully conserve and protect whales;

Whereas, in 1946, a significant number of countries adopted the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling, which established the International Whaling Commission to provide for the proper conservation of whale populations;

Whereas the International Whaling Commission adopted a moratorium on commercial whaling in 1982 to conserve and promote the recovery of whale populations and later established the Indian Ocean and part of the ocean around the Antarctic as a whale sanctuary to further enhance the recovery of whale populations;

Whereas, at the 58th annual International Whaling Commission meeting in St. Kitts in June 2006, the Caribbean countries of Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines voted with pro-whaling interests to support the resumption of commercial whaling by claiming the moratorium is no longer necessary, to allow Japan to hunt 150 minke whales, to remove conservation efforts directed at small whales and dolphins, and to implement secret ballots;

Whereas five of these six Caribbean countries, St. Vincent and the Grenadines abstained, also voted to delete the Southern Ocean Sanctuary;

Whereas a majority of tourists to these six Caribbean countries come from the United States, and the American people are overwhelmingly opposed to the resumption of commercial whaling;

Whereas thirty species of whale and dolphins can be found in the Caribbean, and commercial enterprises offering whale watching tours began in the Caribbean in the mid-1980s and has rapidly expanded;

Whereas the revenue attributable to whale watching far exceeds the revenue attributable to whaling;

Whereas, by supporting the resumption of commercial whaling, a country could adversely affect its international image and jeopardize its tourism industry; and

Whereas, in May 2006, Caribbean environmental leaders, whale watch operators, and tourism industry representatives met in Trinidad to voice their concern and opposition to whaling and to challenge their governments to change their pro-whaling positions: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*
2 *concurring)*, That it is the sense of Congress that—

3 (1) the Caribbean countries of Antigua and
4 Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, St. Kitts and Nevis,
5 St. Lucia, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines
6 should—

7 (A) renounce their support for a resump-
8 tion of commercial whaling and instead support
9 fledgling whale watching operations in the Car-
10ibbean;

11 (B) join with the United States and a ma-
12jority of other countries to support strong con-
13servation measures for whales; and

1 (C) at the next annual International Whal-
2 ing Commission meeting, oppose the resumption
3 of commercial whaling, support existing sanc-
4 tuaries and the creation of new sanctuaries,
5 support strong conservation measures for
6 whales, and oppose the use of secret balloting
7 at International Whaling Commission meetings;
8 and

9 (2) the United States should consider the posi-
10 tion of these Caribbean countries regarding commer-
11 cial whaling when considering any future foreign aid
12 to, or trade agreements with, these countries.

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