

STAND. COM. REP. NO. 371 -08

Honolulu, Hawaii

Feb 13, 2008

RE: H.B. No. 2626

Honorable Calvin K.Y. Say
Speaker, House of Representatives
Twenty-Fourth State Legislature
Regular Session of 2008
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Water, Land, Ocean Resources & Hawaiian Affairs, to which was referred H.B. No. 2626 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO THE DESIGNATION OF THE HAWAIIAN MONK SEAL AS THE STATE MAMMAL OF HAWAI'I,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this bill is to increase awareness of the endangered and endemic Hawaiian monk seal by designating the Hawaiian monk seal as the official state mammal of Hawaii.

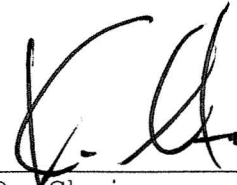
The Department of Land and Natural Resources, Office of Hawaiian Affairs, Hawaiian Monk Seal Recovery Team, KAHEA: The Hawaiian-Environmental Alliance, and numerous concerned individuals testified in support of this bill.

Your Committee finds that there are only 1,200 Hawaiian monk seals remaining, and that this population is at risk from the threat of habitat loss, entanglement in marine debris, human disturbance, fishery interaction, and infectious disease. Designation as the state mammal of Hawaii may help to raise public awareness and encourage protection efforts of this unique but critically endangered species.



As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Water, Land, Ocean Resources & Hawaiian Affairs that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 2626 and recommends that it pass Second Reading and be referred to the Committee on Tourism & Culture.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Water, Land, Ocean
Resources & Hawaiian Affairs,



KEN ITO, Chair



