
HOUSE JOINT MEMORIAL 4016

State of Washington 55th Legislature 1997 Regular Session

By Representatives Morris, Blalock, Gombosky, Cody, Veloria, Kessler, Keiser, Costa and Anderson

Read first time 02/24/97. Referred to Committee on Natural Resources.

1 TO HIS EXCELLENCY KUNIHICO SAITO, AMBASSADOR OF JAPAN TO THE UNITED
2 STATES:

3 We, Your Memorialists, the Senate and House of Representatives of
4 the State of Washington, in legislative session assembled, respectfully
5 represent and petition as follows:

6 WHEREAS, Ten *Orcinus orca* whales, more commonly known as orca or
7 killer whales, were captured by fishermen February 7, 1997, in Hatajim
8 Wan Bay at Taiji on Japan's southeast coast, of which five remain in
9 captivity; and

10 WHEREAS, The remaining whales are likely to be sold for the purpose
11 of putting them on public display; and

12 WHEREAS, Orca whales in captivity live shorter life spans than orca
13 whales left in the wild; and

14 WHEREAS, Orca whales maintain family ties for life which are torn
15 apart by capture; and

16 WHEREAS, Orca whales have a system of dialects for communication,
17 unusual to mammals other than humans; and

18 WHEREAS, Orca whale captures in Washington State waters in the
19 1960's and 1970's captured one-third of the area's orca population and
20 has taken twenty years to replenish; and

1 WHEREAS, Keiko, the orca whale star of the movie "Free Willy" has
2 brought international attention to the issue of whale capture and
3 demonstrates strong public sentiment for returning such creatures to
4 their natural environment;

5 NOW, THEREFORE, Your Memorialists respectfully pray that the
6 government of Japan take steps to release the Taiji whales from
7 captivity and return them to the ocean.

8 BE IT RESOLVED, That copies of this Memorial be immediately
9 transmitted to His Excellency Kunihiko Saito, Ambassador of Japan to
10 the United States.

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