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**SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL 8003**

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**State of Washington 67th Legislature 2021 Regular Session**

**By** Senators Rivers, Warnick, Short, and Wagoner

TO THE HONORABLE JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR., PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES, AND TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE AND THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, AND TO THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE UNITED STATES, IN CONGRESS ASSEMBLED, AND TO THE NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION:

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

WHEREAS, Pinniped predation is a significant threat to already critically endangered and threatened salmon stocks in Washington and throughout the Pacific Northwest; and

WHEREAS, Although pinniped populations were once near depletion, these species have dramatically rebounded in recent decades; and

WHEREAS, Congress adopted changes to the Marine Mammal Protection Act in 2018 to modify the process for the removal of sea lions in certain portions of the Columbia River and its tributaries; and

WHEREAS, Enacting similar changes to the Marine Mammal Protection Act for pinniped management in Puget Sound would protect salmon populations listed under the Endangered Species Act;

NOW, THEREFORE, Your Memorialists respectfully pray that Congress further amend the Marine Mammal Protection Act to allow the lethal removal of pinnipeds in Puget Sound similar to the recent changes authorized in the Columbia River to protect salmon populations by:

(1) Allowing the state and treaty tribes to remove pinnipeds in freshwater river systems and estuaries where there are federally listed salmonids up to the take limits provided under the marine mammal protection act;

(2) Requiring the National Marine Fisheries Service to process a specific permit application for a watershed by a state or treaty tribe within six months of receipt;

(3) Eliminating the requirement of the National Environmental Policy Act for the National Marine Fisheries Service to assess a state or tribal application to remove pinnipeds.

BE IT RESOLVED, That copies of this Memorial be immediately transmitted to the Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the United States, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and each member of Congress from the State of Washington.