



September 1, 2011

The Honorable Mark Begich, Chairman
Subcommittee on Oceans, Atmosphere, Fisheries, and Coast Guard
Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
U.S. Senate
508 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Olympia Snowe, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Oceans, Atmosphere, Fisheries, and Coast Guard
Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
U.S. Senate
566 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Begich and Ranking Member Snowe,

I am writing to you today on behalf of the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) to express our support for S. 1402, the Marine Mammal Protection Amendment Act of 2011, introduced by Senator Scott Brown. IFAW, one of the world's preeminent international animal welfare organizations, works throughout the world to improve the welfare of wild and domestic animals by protecting wildlife habitats, reducing commercial exploitation and helping animals in distress.

Under this bill, the penalty for deliberately harming marine mammals increases from \$20,000 to \$50,000. The bill is a direct response to the intentional killing of six gray seals along the beaches of Cape Cod, Massachusetts in June 2011. IFAW headquarters, located in Cape Cod, has been contacted by many residents who are outraged at this outbreak of seal shootings. Additionally, IFAW, along with two anonymous groups, has offered a \$10,000 reward for information on those responsible. Many IFAW supporters in Cape Cod and throughout the United States were pleased to hear of a bill that addresses the issue of these brutal killings.

IFAW believes the increased fine is important not only for seals, but for all marine mammal species, many of which face serious threats to their long-term survival. We urge the Subcommittee to give strong consideration to this amendment to the Marine Mammal Protection Act.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Flocken
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