

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 9637

To amend the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972 to authorize intentional lethal take by certain Indian Tribes of California sea lions and Steller sea lions in a specified portion of the Columbia River, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 9, 2026

Ms. PEREZ introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources

A BILL

To amend the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972 to authorize intentional lethal take by certain Indian Tribes of California sea lions and Steller sea lions in a specified portion of the Columbia River, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Protecting Columbia
5 River Salmon Act of 2026”.

1 **SEC. 2. INTENTIONAL LETHAL TAKE BY CERTAIN INDIAN**
2 **TRIBES OF CERTAIN PINNIPEDS IN COLUM-**
3 **BIA RIVER.**

4 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 120 of the Marine Mam-
5 mal Protection Act of 1972 (16 U.S.C. 1389) is amended
6 by adding at the end the following:

7 “(k) INTENTIONAL LETHAL TAKE BY CERTAIN IN-
8 DIAN TRIBES OF CERTAIN PINNIPEDS IN COLUMBIA
9 RIVER.—

10 “(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other
11 provision of law, a covered Indian Tribe may inten-
12 tionally lethally take covered pinnipeds on covered
13 waters.

14 “(2) REQUIREMENTS.—With respect to the in-
15 tentional lethal take of covered pinnipeds on covered
16 waters, a covered Indian Tribe—

17 “(A) may carry out such take—

18 “(i) without limitation on—

19 “(I) the number of covered
20 pinnipeds the covered Indian Tribe
21 may take; or

22 “(II) when the covered Indian
23 Tribe may take covered pinnipeds;
24 and

1 “(ii) notwithstanding whether the cov-
2 ered pinnipeds are individually identifiable;
3 and

4 “(B) shall carry out such take—

5 “(i) in a manner the covered Indian
6 Tribe determines to be humane; and

7 “(ii) using methods the covered In-
8 dian Tribe determines appropriate.

9 “(3) DESIGNEES.—A covered Indian Tribe may
10 designate a person to intentionally lethally take cov-
11 ered pinnipeds on covered waters in accordance with
12 the requirements of paragraph (2) on behalf of the
13 covered Indian Tribe.

14 “(4) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in
15 this subsection may be construed to limit existing
16 Tribal rights or authorities under treaties, executive
17 orders, or other provisions of law.

18 “(5) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

19 “(A) COVERED INDIAN TRIBE.—The term
20 ‘covered Indian Tribe’ means an Indian Tribe
21 (as such term is defined in section 102 of the
22 Federally Recognized Indian Tribe List Act of
23 1994 (25 U.S.C. 5130)) that has ancestral ties
24 to any part of covered waters.

1 “(B) COVERED PINNIPED.—The term ‘cov-
2 ered pinniped’ means a—

3 “(i) California sea lion (*Zalophus*
4 *californianus*); and

5 “(ii) Steller sea lion (*Eumetopias*
6 *jubatus*) that is part of the Eastern Dis-
7 tinct Population Segment of Steller sea
8 lions.

9 “(C) COVERED WATERS.—The term ‘cov-
10 ered waters’ means the mainstem and tribu-
11 taries of the Columbia River in the States of
12 Washington and Oregon from River Mile 0 to
13 the McNary Dam.”.

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