

AMENDED IN SENATE APRIL 2, 2008

Senate Concurrent Resolution

No. 85

Introduced by Senators Kuehl, Migden, and Wiggins

(Coauthors: Assembly Members DeSaulnier, Feuer, Jones, and Saldana)

February 26, 2008

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 85—Relative to the Pacific bluefin tuna.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SCR 85, as amended, Kuehl. Pacific bluefin tuna.

This measure would seek the assistance of the Governor, *the Fish and Game Commission*, the Department of Fish and Game, ~~and the Ocean Protection Council in initiating, at the highest international level, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the National Marine Fisheries Service, the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission, and the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Council to work with the Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council and other appropriate authorities to achieve the cessation of illegal, unreported, and unregulated bluefin tuna overfishing, the creation of marine protected areas~~ *implementation of a robust stock assessment of Pacific bluefin tuna to evaluate and enhance conservation efforts for the status of this highly valuable resource, and the imposition and enforcement of catch limits for countries fishing for Pacific bluefin tuna in the United States Exclusive Economic Zone.*

Fiscal committee: yes.

- 1 WHEREAS, The Pacific bluefin tuna is rapidly approaching
- 2 the fate of the collapsed Atlantic bluefin tuna population, which
- 3 ~~has diminished by 90 percent in the Atlantic Ocean and in the~~

1 ~~Mediterranean Sea~~ *has declined by more than 80 percent since*
2 *1975, due to overfishing and the lack of effective conservation*
3 *and protection efforts; and*

4 ~~WHEREAS, The coastal economic losses for California as a~~
5 *WHEREAS, The economic losses for California coastal*
6 *communities as a*

7 *WHEREAS, The populations of all other bluefin tuna species,*
8 *except Pacific bluefin tuna have been declared overfished and*
9 *have been designated as “endangered” or “critically endangered”*
10 *by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN);*
11 *and*

12 *WHEREAS, Complete information on the status of the Pacific*
13 *bluefin tuna requires further study while emerging data suggests*
14 *the fishing pressure on this species is likely to increase due to the*
15 *high worldwide demand for bluefin tuna and the decreased supply*
16 *from Atlantic and Southern bluefin tuna populations; and*

17 *result of the diminishing bluefin tuna population in the Pacific*
18 *Ocean include decreased security of the pelagic (open ocean)*
19 *seafood market and fishing industry, decreased reliability and*
20 *productivity of coastal goods and services, and depletion of jobs*
21 *and income for those communities and stakeholders involved in*
22 *the pelagic seafood fishing industry; and*

23 *WHEREAS, The commercial catch of Pacific bluefin tuna for*
24 *California’s coast from 1950 to 1998 averaged 11,434,390 pounds*
25 *per year; however, since 1999, the average catch has spiraled down*
26 *to an average of 294,544 pounds of tuna per year, a devastating*
27 *drop; and*

28 ~~WHEREAS, Overfishing of the Pacific bluefin tuna, sparked~~
29 ~~by increasing demand by countries around the world, poses an~~
30 ~~imminent threat to California’s coastal economy that has created~~
31 ~~a need for global solutions to preserve the population of the species~~
32 ~~for California; and~~

33 *WHEREAS, Overfishing has caused dramatic shifts in bluefin*
34 *tuna populations that have pushed the species closer to extinction*
35 *on a global scale; and*

36 *WHEREAS, The potential crisis facing the Pacific bluefin tuna*
37 *population could portend future oceanic ecological losses because*
38 *of the loss of habitat and the inability of the ocean environment to*
39 *recover from a biological disruption of such significance that could*
40 *adversely affect the sustainability of current marine life; and*

1 ~~WHEREAS, Without the abundance of the Pacific bluefin tuna~~
2 ~~serving as predators along California’s coastline, an environment~~
3 ~~is provided for the Humboldt squid (*Dosidicus gigas*) to invade~~
4 ~~and devour marine life~~

5 ~~WHEREAS, The declining tuna population off California’s coast~~
6 ~~is one of several factors accounting for the rising numbers of its~~
7 ~~prey, the Humboldt squid (*Dosidicus gigas*), which can invade and~~
8 ~~devour marine life in the tuna’s absence, thereby drastically~~
9 ~~altering the composition and structure of the pelagic community~~
10 ~~for the coast of California; and~~

11 ~~WHEREAS, Tuna swim in enormous schools, often numbering~~
12 ~~in the thousands, that allow modern fishing nets to scoop up which~~
13 ~~allows the capture of entire schools of bluefin tuna, threatening~~
14 ~~the survival of the global bluefin tuna population populations and~~
15 ~~significantly facilitating overfishing of the bluefin tuna; and~~

16 ~~WHEREAS, The Pacific bluefin tuna is a slow growing,~~
17 ~~long-lived endothermic fish that migrates thousands of miles across~~
18 ~~the open ocean to feed and spawn; and~~

19 ~~WHEREAS, The Pacific bluefin tuna is endangered caught by~~
20 ~~the fishing fleets of nations that capture the tuna at their spawning~~
21 ~~areas near Japan, Taiwan, and the Philippines before they have a~~
22 ~~chance to spawn, which further decimates the Pacific bluefin tuna~~
23 ~~population; and~~

24 ~~WHEREAS, The Pacific Fishery Management Council, which~~
25 ~~manages fisheries that include highly migratory species, like tunas,~~
26 ~~in the Exclusive Economic Zone, three to 200 miles off the coasts~~
27 ~~of Washington, Oregon, and California, has difficulty enforcing~~
28 ~~the federal Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and~~
29 ~~Management Act and other laws that affect fisheries management~~
30 ~~and which dictate catch limits of the Pacific bluefin tuna; and~~

31 ~~WHEREAS, Research institutions that support and promote~~
32 ~~bluefin tuna protection through governance stewardship include~~
33 ~~the Monterey Bay Aquarium, the Monterey Bay Aquarium~~
34 ~~Research Institute of Science and Engineering, the Blue Oceans~~
35 ~~Institute, the National Environmental Trust, the World Wildlife~~
36 ~~Fund, the Tuna Research and Conservation Center, Hopkins Marine~~
37 ~~Station of Stanford University, the Ocean Conservancy, the~~
38 ~~California Coastal Commission, the National Oceanic and~~
39 ~~Atmospheric Administration, the Natural Resources Defense~~

1 Council, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United
2 Nations, and the National Marine Fisheries Service; now, therefore,
3 *WHEREAS, Research institutions, agencies, and organizations*
4 *that support and promote bluefin tuna protection range from local*
5 *research institutes and state agencies, to federal organizations*
6 *and nonprofits, to international councils and committees; and*

7 *WHEREAS, The current national and international regulatory*
8 *structure of undeclared fishing stocks is failing to provide*
9 *prospective management and protection for the Pacific bluefin*
10 *tuna population against growing pressures due to a lack of*
11 *sufficient data which would allow full analysis of current and*
12 *future threats throughout the migratory range of the species and*
13 *help to prevent the collapse of the Pacific bluefin tuna as has been*
14 *found in other bluefin tuna populations; now, therefore, be it*

15 *Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the Assembly*
16 *thereof concurring, That the state Legislature acknowledges the*
17 *devastation to the pelagic community off California's coast from*
18 *the mismanagement of the seriously imperiled Pacific bluefin tuna*
19 *potential devastation to the Pacific bluefin tuna species, and*
20 *supports efforts to recover and preserve the population; and be it*
21 *further*

22 *Resolved, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of*
23 *this resolution to the Governor, the Fish and Game Commission,*
24 *the Department of Fish and Game, and the Ocean Protection*
25 *Council, to seek their assistance in initiating, at the highest*
26 *international level, the cessation of illegal, the Ocean Protection*
27 *Council, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration,*
28 *the National Marine Fisheries Service, the Inter-American Tropical*
29 *Tuna Commission, and the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries*
30 *Council to seek their assistance in working with the Pacific*
31 *Regional Fishery Management Council and other appropriate*
32 *authorities for the cessation of illegal, unreported, and unregulated*
33 *bluefin tuna overfishing, the creation of marine protected areas*
34 *implementation of a robust stock assessment for Pacific bluefin*
35 *tuna to evaluate and enhance conservation efforts for the status*
36 *of this highly valuable resource, and the imposition and*
37 *enforcement of catch limits for countries fishing for Pacific bluefin*

- 1 ~~tuna in the~~ *catch limits for Pacific bluefin tuna in the United States*
- 2 Exclusive Economic Zone.

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