

# Senate Passes Mammal Bill

The United States Senate passed the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972 declaring a moratorium on the taking and importation of marine mammals and products into the United States, and establishing a federal Marine Mammal Commission to establish methods for the protection and conservation of marine mammals.

Alaskan Natives are specifically exempted from the provision of the act if they take mammals for subsistence purposes or for the creating and selling of authentic articles of handicrafts and clothing.

Also, edible portions of marine mammals may be sold in native villages for native consumption.

An amendment which would retain authority with the states to conserve, control and manage marine mammals in or on lands in their jurisdiction was introduced by Senator Ted Stevens, R-Alaska, and defeated by a vote of 26-63.

Stevens argued that the state of Alaska had a superior management program which had resulted in an increase of mammals since statehood.

Supporting his amendment, the Alaska Republican warned, "The basic purpose of the group that is sponsoring this bill is to stop hunting of all wildlife without any scientific basis. Next it will be brown bear, then moose and deer, then rabbits."

Stevens said he was disappointed that his amendment was not accepted, but that he voted in favor of the final bill because it contained provisions to protect Alaskan natives for which he had worked in committee.

Additionally, Stevens said that he had voted for the bill so that he would be appointed to the joint House-Senate Conference Committee and be in a

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position to protect provisions that benefit Alaskans.

The house-adopted bill did not contain provisions to protect Alaskan native arts and crafts.

Stevens said, "I want to thank Senator Ernest Hollings of South Carolina who did a good job on this bill. Senator Hollings permitted me to take the committee to Nome and Bethel to hear first-hand the effect this bill would have on Alaskan natives. Through this effort we were able to get the exemptions in this bill for Alaskan native arts and crafts.