

**Center for Biological Diversity • Endangered Species Coalition**

**Defenders of Wildlife • Greenpeace • Natural Resources Defense Council**

June 18, 2008

Senator Darrell Steinberg, Chair  
Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Water  
California State Senate

**Re: AJR. 41 (Lieu) Polar Bear and Penguin Protection - SUPPORT**

Dear Chairman Steinberg and Members of the Committee:

We write on behalf of the undersigned organizations to express our strong support for A.J.R. 41, as amended, by Assembly Member Mr. Ted Lieu, adopted by the Assembly on April 3, 2008. A.J.R. 41 would put the California State Assembly on record memorializing the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to move forward on efforts to provide federal Endangered Species Act protections for the polar bear and ten penguin species threatened by the impacts of global warming.

This resolution is extremely timely and necessary. The Bush Administration is strongly resisting efforts to protect these amazing creatures, after repeatedly delaying the process to list the polar bear and penguin species under the Endangered Species Act. The Administration is many months overdue in deciding whether or not to propose protections for ten penguin species—over half of the world's penguin species—threatened by global warming and other factors. Under a court-mandated deadline, the Bush Administration last month finally listed the polar bear as threatened under the Endangered Species Act, but then implemented a special rule to withhold critical protections for polar bears and their habitat.

As A.J.R. 41 makes clear, the polar bear and the penguin species are among the most threatened by the early impacts of global warming. The sea ice habitat on which the polar bear depends is literally melting away, with a record minimum sea ice extent in 2007 that was a million square miles below the average minimum of the past several decades. Penguin species are threatened not just by the direct effects of global warming on their habitat, but also on the indirect effects on the food chain they need to survive.

We are extremely supportive of A.J.R. 41, and we commend Assembly Member Ted Lieu for sponsoring this resolution, and we commend the Assembly for adopting it, to raise awareness and to send a strong message on this issue. It is important to demonstrate to the Bush Administration that California is strongly committed to fighting global warming, cares deeply about wildlife and habitats both inside and outside the state

borders, and is alarmed at the dismal response of the administration to the climate crisis. We urge an “aye” vote when AJR 41 is heard in Committee.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

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CC: Senators Mr. Dennis Hollingsworth, Mr. Dave Cogdill, Ms. Christine Kehoe, Ms. Sheila Kuehl, Mr. Michael Machado, Mr. Bob Margett, and Ms. Carole Migden.