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[REDACTED]  
Olympia, Washington 98506  
March 24, 1976

The Honorable Bob Dole  
United States Senator  
Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Dole:

During 1969 - 70, I was with the White House Congressional Relations staff, as an assistant to Lyn Nofziger under Bryce Harlow. Because I remember working with your office at that time, I am writing now to ask your help on an issue I feel is very important, the passage of Senate Bill No. 3031. (I am currently living in Olympia and am married to [REDACTED], a special assistant to Governor Dan Evans).

About two weeks ago, on Sunday, March 7, my husband and I were sailing with friends out of the Olympia harbor. Completely unexpectedly, we arrived at the site where a group of men employed by the Sea World corporation were capturing a group of killer whales (orcas).

Without going into all the details of that deplorable scene, I will simply say that it was a cruel example of man using high-powered machines to chase down desperate animals who had no hope of escape. Sea World has developed a method of capture which includes a seaplane, a large "purse seiner" vessel, two smaller, powerful motor boats, and explosive devices. (Enclosed is a news clipping which gives an account of the operation and an editorial, both from the Seattle Post-Intelligencer).

In the days following the capture, a legal suit was filed in the Federal District Court by the Attorney General of Washington State, on behalf of the Governor, against Sea World and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, protesting that the methods of capture used (and observed by a representative of NOAA) violated the terms of the permit issued to Sea World in 1974. Since March 7, too, three of the captured whales escaped from the net and one was released because it was inappropriate under terms of the permit.

A settlement was agreed upon following three days of hearings yesterday, whereby the two remaining whales are to be turned over to the University of Washington for study and installation of radio tracking devices for research, but are to be released to Puget Sound within 60 days. A further provision states that Sea World may not capture killer whales in Washington State waters, under this or any future permit. While some of the scientists who have studied these animals most closely are concerned about the dangers posed to the two animals by installing the devices onto their dorsal fins, all of the persons who have been working on the case are gratified that Sea World's operations in this state have been halted.

We still feel it is very important that Senate Bill 3031, prohibiting the capture of orca in any United States territorial waters for display purposes, be passed. The bill has been passed out of the Commerce Committee, and I understand that it will be up for a vote before the full Senate soon.



The Honorable Bob Dole

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Subject: S.B. 3031

From the limited study I have done on these mammals, I have learned that they are very intelligent, sensitive and peaceful toward man (the name "killer whale" is misleading; although they do prey upon fish, seals, etc. for food, they have never been known to attack man). They have a highly developed social system and live throughout their lifetimes in close family groups (pods); when a pod is broken up through capture of some members, the others of the pod exhibit signs of emotion and stress and remain close to the captured whales for long periods of time, crying out to them (this occurred right in the Olympia harbor). The record of survival of captured killer whales sent to aquariums is very poor -- less than half of these whales have lived for more than a few years (although their life span is at least 20 - 30 years, perhaps as high as 80 years in some animals). In addition to this, there has never been a successful breeding in captivity.

For these and other reasons, I urge you to vote for the passage of Senate Bill 3031. If anyone on your staff would be interested in further information, I would be happy to provide what I could -- we have a complete file of clippings on this capture and the subsequent hearings, as well as scientific articles on orcas. Thank you very much for your consideration of this important issue.

Sincerely,

[Redacted Signature]

[Redacted Address]

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Washburn Bldg





NATURAL RESOURCES/fish and wildlife

May 12, 1976

[REDACTED]  
Olympia, Washington 98506

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your letter in regard to Senate bill S. 3130. This bill provides certain protections for the orcinus orca species (the killer whale).

On March 29, this measure passed the Senate by a voice vote and was referred to the House Committee on Merchant Marines and Fisheries. This Committee is planning on holding hearings on this bill and related House bills this month.

One must not lose sight of the fact that we are interested in preserving the environment and its inhabitants. Research and experiments are constantly underway for this very purpose in both federal and private institutions.

Certainly appreciate your expression of concern and interest. Be assured that I will keep your views in mind as related legislation comes to my attention. If I may be of any assistance in the future, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Sincerely yours,

BOB DOLE  
United States Senator

BD:jv