

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY JUNE 17, 2008

AMENDED IN SENATE APRIL 2, 2008

**Senate Concurrent Resolution**

**No. 85**

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**Introduced by Senators Kuehl, Migden, and Wiggins**

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

February 26, 2008

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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, the Ocean Protection Council, 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 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 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 declined by more than 80 percent since 1975, due to overfishing
- 4 and the lack of effective conservation and protection efforts; and

1 WHEREAS, The economic losses for California coastal  
2 communities as a *result of the diminishing bluefin tuna population*  
3 *in the Pacific Ocean include decreased security of the pelagic*  
4 *(open ocean) seafood market and fishing industry, decreased*  
5 *reliability and productivity of coastal goods and services, and*  
6 *depletion of jobs and income for those communities and*  
7 *stakeholders involved in the pelagic seafood fishing industry; and*

8 WHEREAS, The populations of all other bluefin tuna species,  
9 except Pacific bluefin tuna have been declared overfished and have  
10 been designated as “endangered” or “critically endangered” by the  
11 International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN); 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 has caused dramatic shifts in bluefin  
29 tuna populations that have pushed the species closer to extinction  
30 on a global scale; and

31 WHEREAS, The potential crisis facing the Pacific bluefin tuna  
32 population could portend future oceanic ecological losses because  
33 of the loss of habitat and the inability of the ocean environment to  
34 recover from a biological disruption of such significance that could  
35 adversely affect the sustainability of current marine life; and

36 WHEREAS, The declining tuna population off California’s  
37 coast is one of several factors accounting for the rising numbers  
38 of its prey, the Humboldt squid (*Dosidicus gigas*), which can invade  
39 and devour marine life in the tuna’s absence, thereby drastically

1 altering the composition and structure of the pelagic community  
2 for the coast of California; and

3 WHEREAS, Tuna swim in enormous schools, often numbering  
4 in the thousands, which allows the capture of entire schools of  
5 bluefin tuna, threatening global bluefin tuna populations and  
6 significantly facilitating overfishing of the bluefin tuna; and

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

10 WHEREAS, The Pacific bluefin tuna is caught by the fishing  
11 fleets of nations that capture the tuna at their spawning areas near  
12 Japan, Taiwan, and the Philippines before they have a chance to  
13 spawn, which further decimates the Pacific bluefin tuna population;  
14 and

15 WHEREAS, Research institutions, agencies, and organizations  
16 that support and promote bluefin tuna protection range from local  
17 research institutes and state agencies, to federal organizations and  
18 nonprofits, to international councils and committees; and

19 WHEREAS, The current national and international regulatory  
20 structure of undeclared fishing stocks is failing to provide  
21 prospective management and protection for the Pacific bluefin  
22 tuna population against growing pressures due to a lack of  
23 sufficient data which would allow full analysis of current and  
24 future threats throughout the migratory range of the species and  
25 help to prevent the collapse of the Pacific bluefin tuna as has been  
26 found in other bluefin tuna populations; now, therefore, be it

27 *Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the Assembly*  
28 *thereof concurring*, That the state Legislature acknowledges the  
29 potential devastation to the Pacific bluefin tuna species, and  
30 supports efforts to recover and preserve the population; and be it  
31 further

32 *Resolved*, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of  
33 this resolution to the Governor, the Fish and Game Commission,  
34 the Department of Fish and Game, the Ocean Protection Council,  
35 the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the National  
36 Marine Fisheries Service, the Inter-American Tropical Tuna  
37 Commission, and the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Council  
38 to seek their assistance in working with the Pacific Regional  
39 Fishery Management Council and other appropriate authorities for  
40 the cessation of illegal, unreported, and unregulated bluefin tuna

- 1 overfishing, the implementation of a robust stock assessment for
- 2 Pacific bluefin tuna to evaluate and enhance conservation efforts
- 3 for the status of this highly valuable resource, and the imposition
- 4 and enforcement of catch limits for Pacific bluefin tuna in the
- 5 United States Exclusive Economic Zone.

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