

The Honourable Mac Harb
The Senate of Canada
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Dear Senator Harb,

I am writing to thank you for your efforts to halt the commercial seal hunt in Canada. The seal hunt controversy has raged for almost 40 years and still the number of seals killed increases and the cruelty continues unchecked.

For decades, baby seals (over 10 days and under 3 months) have died a cruel and horrific death. The federal government has tried and failed to make the sealing industry humane. According to a 2001 comprehensive study conducted by five independent veterinarians the hunt results “in considerable and unacceptable suffering”. Even more disturbing, their report shows that perhaps as many as 50,000 seals were skinned alive.

In addition, the affects of global warming are affecting the seals. Current Environment Canada long-range sea ice and weather predictions raise concerns that the traditional whelping areas of harp and hooded seals in the Gulf will likely be ice free. The seals need pack ice to whelp, nurse, and successfully wean their pups. These concerns are supported by the recent scientific work by D. W. Johnston *et al.* published in *Climate Research*, “Variation in sea ice cover on the east coast of Canada from 1969 to 2002: climate variability and implications for harp and hooded seals”

The bodies of the hundreds of thousands of seals who die every year are left to rot on the ice and their skins are used in the destructive and wasteful fur industry. Canadian taxpayer dollars are supporting this marginal industry – paying for icebreakers to provide access to seal herds, providing rescue support when sealers run into difficulty, developing and marketing seal products, and sending delegations abroad to defend the hunt and to lobby foreign governments.

Therefore, I support the legislation that you introduced to the Senate to amend *The Fisheries Act*, effectively ending the commercial seal hunt. The 2009 Federal Budget established a two year, \$1 billion Community Adjustment Fund to help communities restructure. Resources, and perhaps more importantly, the political will for change, are now at hand to assist in the shift of economic focus for this region. Let’s end the commercial seal hunt and start building a viable humane, environmentally sustainable alternative industry for these small but vital communities. I am thankful for your efforts to end Canada’s commercial seal hunt. As a Canadian, I proudly support your initiative for this long-overdue legislation.

Sincerely,

Signature

Name (please print)

Address

City

Prov.

Postal Code