

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 631

To amend the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972 to allow the importation of polar bear trophies taken in sport hunts in Canada.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 28, 2021

Mr. YOUNG introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources

A BILL

To amend the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972 to allow the importation of polar bear trophies taken in sport hunts in Canada.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Restoration of the
5 U.S.-Russia Polar Bear Conservation Fund Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 The Congress finds the following:

8 (1) The United States Fish and Wildlife Service
9 estimates that the polar bear population is currently

1 at 20,000 to 25,000 bears, up from as low as 5,000
2 to 10,000 bears in the 1950s and 1960s.

3 (2) A 2002 United States Geological Survey of
4 wildlife in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge Coast-
5 al Plain noted that the polar bear populations “may
6 now be near historic highs”.

7 (3) A permit fee for importing polar bears will
8 invigorate the public-private funding partnership for
9 the United States-Russian Polar Bear Conservation
10 Fund.

11 (4) TRAFFIC, the wildlife trade monitoring
12 network, has stated both that “the global population
13 of Polar Bears is not small and the species’ area of
14 distribution is not restricted,” and “[t]rade does not
15 appear to be a significant threat to the species.”.
16 TRAFFIC also recommended that the polar bear
17 not be uplisted to appendix 1 at the 16th Conference
18 of the Parties of the Convention on International
19 Trade of Endangered Species of Fauna and Flora
20 (CITES).

21 (5) The International Union for Conservation of
22 Nature (IUCN)/Species Survival Commission (SSC)
23 Polar Bear Specialist Group (PBSG), has stated
24 that further trade restrictions on the polar bear are
25 “unlikely to confer a conservation benefit, and could

1 have a negative impact on socioeconomic systems as
2 well as domestic and international partnerships”.

3 (6) The International Union for Conservation of
4 Nature has found that “hunting is a form of wildlife
5 use that, when well-managed, may assist in fur-
6 thering conservation objectives by creating the rev-
7 enue and economic incentives for the management
8 and conservation of the target species and its habi-
9 tat, as well as supporting local livelihoods”.

10 **SEC. 3. PERMITS FOR IMPORTATION OF POLAR BEAR TRO-**
11 **PHIES.**

12 The Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972 is
13 amended—

14 (1) in section 101(a)(3)(B) (16 U.S.C.
15 1371(a)(3)(B)), by inserting “or under section
16 104(c)(5) of this title” after “paragraph (5) of this
17 subsection”; and

18 (2) in section 102(b)(3) (16 U.S.C.
19 1372(b)(3)), by inserting before the semicolon the
20 following: “, except that this paragraph does not
21 prohibit the importation of polar bear parts under a
22 permit issued under section 104(c)(5) of this title”.

○