

113TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. RES. 463

Honoring the life, accomplishments, and legacy of Billy Frank, Jr., and
expressing condolences on his passing.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 22, 2014

Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. CANTWELL) submitted the following
resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

RESOLUTION

Honoring the life, accomplishments, and legacy of Billy
Frank, Jr., and expressing condolences on his passing.

Whereas in the 1850s, the United States Government signed
a series of treaties with Washington State tribes under
which the tribes granted millions of acres of land to the
United States in exchange for the establishment of res-
ervations and the recognition of traditional hunting and
fishing rights;

Whereas Billy Frank, Jr., was born to Willie Frank, Sr., and
Angeline Frank on March 9, 1931, at Frank's Landing
on the banks of the Nisqually River in Washington State;

Whereas the tireless efforts and dedication of Billy Frank,
Jr., led to a historic legal victory that ensured that the
United States would honor promises made in treaties
with the Washington tribes;

Whereas Billy Frank, Jr., was first arrested in December of 1945, at the age of 14, for fishing for salmon in the Nisqually River;

Whereas Billy Frank, Jr., was subsequently arrested more than 50 times for exercising his treaty-protected right to fish for salmon;

Whereas over the years, Billy Frank, Jr., and other tribal members staged “fish-ins” that often placed the protestors in danger of being arrested or attacked;

Whereas during these fish-ins, Billy Frank, Jr., and others demanded that they be allowed to fish in historically tribal waters, a right the Nisqually had reserved in the Treaty of Medicine Creek;

Whereas declining salmon runs in Washington waters resulted in increased arrests of tribal members exercising their fishing rights under the Treaty;

Whereas, on February 12, 1974, in the case of United States v. Washington, Judge George Hugo Boldt of the United States District Court for the Western District of Washington issued a decision that affirmed the right of Washington treaty tribes to take up to half of the harvestable fish in tribal fishing waters and reaffirmed that the United States must honor treaties made with Native American tribes;

Whereas the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals and the Supreme Court of the United States upheld the Boldt decision, and the treaty tribes became co-managers of the salmon resource in the State of Washington;

Whereas after the Boldt decision, Billy Frank, Jr., continued his fight to protect natural resources, salmon, and a healthy environment;

Whereas the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission, where Billy Frank, Jr., served as chairman, works to establish working relationships with State agencies and non-Indian groups to manage fisheries, restore and protect habitats, and protect tribal treaty rights;

Whereas Billy Frank, Jr., refused to be bitter in the face of jail, racism, and abuse, and his influence was felt not just in Washington State but around the world;

Whereas Billy Frank, Jr., was awarded the Albert Schweitzer Prize for Humanitarianism, the Common Cause Award for Human Rights Efforts, the American Indian Distinguished Service Award, the Washington State Environmental Excellence Award, and the Wallace Stegner Award for his years of service and dedication to his battle;

Whereas the legacy of Billy Frank, Jr., will live on in stories, in memories, and every time a tribal member exercises his or her right to harvest salmon in Washington State; and

Whereas the legacy of Billy Frank, Jr., transcends his 83 years and will provide inspiration to those still around today and those still to come: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) honors the life, legacy, and many accom-
3 pishments of Billy Frank, Jr.; and

4 (2) extends its heartfelt sympathies and condo-
5 lences to the family of Billy Frank, Jr., the

- 1 Nisqually Tribe, all Native Americans, and all people
- 2 around the world who were inspired by his example.

