

H. Res. 415

In the House of Representatives, U.S.,

July 11, 2000.

Whereas the oceans cover 71 percent of the Earth's surface and are key to the life support systems for all creatures on this planet;

Whereas the oceans contain a wondrous abundance and diversity of life, from the smallest microorganism to the mammoth blue whale;

Whereas two-thirds of the world's people live within 50 miles of a coast and one out of six American jobs are in fishing, shipping, or tourism;

Whereas the oceans provide almost limitless opportunities for exploration and discovery, and could supply a key source of life-saving medicines and treatments;

Whereas oceanography has contributed to an understanding of global climate change and the effects of the ocean on climate and weather, which inevitably has an impact on safety and quality of life;

Whereas efforts are underway to develop a new ocean monitoring system that will give us a better understanding of the critical relationship between oceans and global climate change;

Whereas a deepened understanding of the seas will enable us to track marine mammals, predict deadly storms such as

those associated with El Niño, detect illegal fishing, and gain new insights into the complexities of climate change;

Whereas the oceans and coastal areas supply vital sources of food upon which people depend and that could be deteriorated by poor stewardship;

Whereas decades of pollution from industrial waste, sewage, and toxic runoff have taken their toll on the health of the oceans and on the marine life in them;

Whereas recent studies suggest that nearly 60 percent of the world's coral reefs, the "rainforests of the sea", are being degraded or destroyed by human activities and 10 percent of the reefs may already be degraded beyond recovery;

Whereas fisheries and the food and products they produce are essential to the world's economy and steps should be taken to ensure that they do not become overexploited;

Whereas in the 21st century, people will look increasingly to the oceans to meet their everyday needs;

Whereas the oceans' resources are limited, and nations must work together to conserve them;

Whereas the oceans are the core of our own humanity, a treasure shared by all nations of the world, and our stewardship of this resource is our responsibility to our children, grandchildren, and all of Earth's inhabitants;

Whereas June 8th was declared Oceans Day at the Earth Summit Conference in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 and similar declarations have been made by individual nations;

Whereas the State of Hawaii has designated the first Wednesday of June as Ocean Day, in recognition of the very significant role the ocean plays in the lives of Ha-

waii's people, as well as Hawaii's culture, history, and traditions; and

Whereas the establishment of a National Ocean Day will raise awareness of the vital role oceans play in human life and that human beings must play in the life of the ocean: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the House of Representatives that a National Ocean Day should be established to recognize the significant role the ocean plays in the lives of the Nation's people, and the important role the Nation's people must play in the continued life of the ocean.

Attest:

Clerk.