

SJM 8004 - DIGEST

Requests that certain federal officials prevent the breaching of any dam in the Columbia river system.

SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL 8004

State of Washington

65th Legislature

2017 Regular Session

By Senators Sheldon, Honeyford, Padden, Rossi, Baumgartner, Brown, Rivers, Schoesler, Becker, Hawkins, Braun, and Warnick

Read first time 01/19/17. Referred to Committee on Energy, Environment & Telecommunications.

1 TO THE HONORABLE DONALD TRUMP, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,
2 AND TO THE HONORABLE MIKE PENCE, VICE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,
3 AND TO THE SPEAKER OF THE UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, AND
4 TO EACH MEMBER OF CONGRESS REPRESENTING THE STATE OF WASHINGTON OR A
5 CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT THEREIN, AND TO THE UNITED STATES ARMY CORPS
6 OF ENGINEERS COMMANDING GENERAL AND CHIEF OF ENGINEERS, AND TO THE
7 UNITED STATES BUREAU OF RECLAMATION COMMISSIONER, AND TO THE
8 BONNEVILLE POWER ADMINISTRATION ADMINISTRATOR:

9 We, your Memorialists, the Senate and House of Representatives of
10 the State of Washington, in legislative session assembled,
11 respectfully represent and petition as follows:

12 WHEREAS, The Columbia River system includes fourteen federal
13 multiple-purpose dams, which are operated as a coordinated system in
14 Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington; and

15 WHEREAS, The United States Army Corps of Engineers was authorized
16 to construct, operate, and maintain twelve dams in the system for
17 flood control, power generation, navigation, fish and wildlife
18 conservation, recreation, and municipal and industrial water supply
19 purposes; and

20 WHEREAS, The Bureau of Reclamation was authorized to construct,
21 operate, and maintain two dams in the system for flood control, power
22 generation, navigation, and irrigation; and

1 WHEREAS, The Bonneville Power Administration is responsible for
2 marketing and transmitting the hydroelectric power generated by the
3 dams in the system; and

4 WHEREAS, The total hydroelectric generation capacity of the dams
5 in the system represents the bulk of power generation in the Pacific
6 Northwest and can power approximately seven million homes; and

7 WHEREAS, The system provides for supplies of water that are used
8 for irrigating vast tracts of land in Washington, thereby supporting
9 the state's critical agriculture sector; and

10 WHEREAS, The system provides for navigation from Lewiston, Idaho,
11 to the Pacific Ocean that facilitates the transport of an average
12 fifty-seven million tons of commodities, including exports, each
13 year; and

14 WHEREAS, The system's reservoirs are used for managing water flow
15 to reduce the risk of catastrophic floods; and

16 WHEREAS, A diverse range of recreational opportunities are found
17 on or near system reservoirs; and

18 WHEREAS, Continuous configuration and operations improvements,
19 including fish passage, have led to progressively higher salmon and
20 steelhead counts at the dams over time; and

21 WHEREAS, The federal agencies responsible for operating the
22 system are preparing an environmental impact statement under the
23 National Environmental Policy Act; and

24 WHEREAS, The agencies leading the environmental impact statement
25 process will be considering alternatives for modifying system
26 operations, including breaching one or more dams; and

27 WHEREAS, Breaching any dam in the system would significantly
28 alter system operations and severely diminish hydroelectric power
29 generation, irrigation, navigation, flood risk management,
30 recreation, and fish and wildlife benefits the system currently
31 provides to the people of Washington; and

32 WHEREAS, The Washington State Legislature recognizes the
33 importance of the Columbia River system for the security and
34 prosperity of the state, and expresses its concern that breaching any
35 dam in the system will be to the detriment of the State of
36 Washington;

37 NOW, THEREFORE, Your Memorialists respectfully pray that you take
38 any and all action within your authority to prevent the breaching of
39 any dam in the Columbia River system.

1 BE IT RESOLVED, That copies of this Memorial be immediately
2 transmitted to the Honorable Donald Trump, President of the United
3 States, the Honorable Mike Pence, Vice President of the United
4 States, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives,
5 each member of Congress representing the State of Washington or a
6 congressional district therein, the United States Army Corps of
7 Engineers Commanding General and Chief of Engineers, the United
8 States Bureau of Reclamation Commissioner, and the Bonneville Power
9 Administration Administrator.

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