



The SWIMS ACT

Sponsors: Adam B. Schiff (D-CA), Jared Huffman (D-CA), Suzan DelBene (D-WA), Dianne Feinstein (D-CA)
Endorsed by: Animal Defenders International, Animal Welfare Institute, Born Free USA, Cetacean Society International, CompassionWorks International, Earth Island Institute, Endangered Species Coalition, FOUR PAWS USA, Jean-Michael Cousteau's Ocean Futures Society, Last Chance for Animals, Michelson Center for Public Policy, Nonhuman Rights Project, Oceanic Preservation Society, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, Performing Animal Welfare Society, Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine, Whale Sanctuary Project

Whales are proven to be among the most intelligent species

- Scientific studies have shown that certain cetaceans - namely orcas, beluga whales, pilot whales, and false killer whales - are cognitively, emotionally, and socially complex animals.
- They are able to engage in creative problem solving, intentional communication, show empathy and complex emotions for others, and form lifelong bonds.

Whales cannot thrive in captivity

- For decades, these species have been held captive for display, where they are exploited, sometimes isolated, and often die prematurely.
- Science increasingly supports that these species - due to their cognitive sophistication, sociality, wide-ranging nature, and size - suffer in captivity, where they often engage in behavior indicative of suffering and distress.
- Current federal laws allow these whales to be confined in concrete tanks that fail to meet their basic psychological, physical, and social needs.

THERE ARE ROUGHLY 50 WHALES LIVING IN CAPTIVITY IN THE UNITED STATES.



The Strengthening Welfare in Marine Settings (SWIMS) Act would end the future capture and breeding of these whale species for public display.

Specifically, the bill would:

- Amend the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972 to prohibit the taking, importation, or exportation of these whales for the purpose of public display.
- Amend the Animal Welfare Act to prohibit any breeding of these whales for future public display.
- Allow exemptions for animals being transported to a sanctuary setting or released to the wild.