

## (December 13, 2007) Lipinski Denounces Illegal Japanese Whaling

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Calls on President to Condemn Japan's Actions and Seek End to All Future Hunts

[Washington, D.C.] Today, Rep. Dan Lipinski (IL-3) sent a letter to President Bush requesting his public condemnation of Japan for disregarding an international ban and allowing the killing of over 1,000 whales, many of them endangered. The letter, signed by 76 Members of the House of Representatives, also calls for an end to all future hunts and expresses support for trade restrictions on Japan that would help conserve whales.

"I am deeply troubled by Japan's complete disregard of an international ban on whale hunts that has protected whales since the 1940's," stated Lipinski. "The Bush Administration should take a firm stance against Japan's actions by pursuing appropriate diplomatic, economic, and trade measures to ensure that international protections for whales are not undermined, but strengthened. We must continue to protect these fragile creatures that are being threatened by human activity."

On November 19, a fleet of Japanese whalers set sail from the port of Shimonoseki with plans to kill over 1,000 whales, including the Minke Whale and the endangered Humpback and Fin Whales. Although an international moratorium against commercial whaling has been in effect since 1986, Japan has circumvented this international treaty, killing nearly 11,000 whales for commercial purposes under the guise of "scientific research."

"My very first venture into political activism occurred when I was 9 years old and I collected signatures on a petition to the Japanese government protesting the killing of dolphins by tuna fishers," stated Lipinski. "Now, over 30 years later, I continue to work to protect our environment and its inhabitants because it is critically important that we conserve the planet for future generations."

In addition to this effort, Rep. Lipinski has been committed to animal welfare issues in the 110th Congress, including efforts to strengthen prohibitions against animal fighting and the use of dog and cat fur products. As a member of the Congressional Wildlife Refuge Caucus, he is a cosponsor of legislation to protect rare cats and dogs, to prohibit aerial hunting of wildlife, to restore healthy populations of salmon and steelhead in the Pacific Northwest, and to permanently protect the Arctic coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, while also supporting efforts to prevent the importation of polar bear trophies.