H.R. 1761 Marine Turtle Conservation Reauthorization Act of 2011

AVMA Position: Support

Summary:
Introduced by Congressman Pierre Pierluisi (Puerto Rico), H.R. 1761 would:
- Authorize appropriations to carry out the Marine Turtle Conservation Fund for FY2012-FY2017.
- Expand marine turtle conservation assistance under the Marine Turtle Conservation Act of 2004 to include the United States and its territories.

Background:
- The AVMA is a member of the Multinational Species Coalition that works to gain support for this and other Multinational Species Conservation Fund programs.
- All sea turtles occurring in US waters are listed under the Endangered Species Act.
- Congress passed the Marine Turtle Conservation Act in 2004 which create the Marine Turtle Conservation Fund to ensure the long-term survival of these imperiled species, by assisting in the conservation of marine turtles and their nesting habitats in foreign countries.
- The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service awards grants from the fund support a range of conservation efforts protecting nesting populations and beaches in foreign countries.
- For more information go to: http://www.fws.gov/international/DIC/speciesmarine_turtles marine_turtle.html

Justification:
- Continued funding for this conservation program is a critical component in protecting endangered and threatened marine turtle species from further population reductions and facilitating their survival in their native habitats.
- Allowing for funds to be used for conservation efforts within the US and its territories is ideal because most marine turtles can be found in US waters and will allow for expanded and more impactful conservation.

Current Status:
- House Committee on the Natural Resources, Subcommittee on Fisheries, Wildlife, Oceans, and Insular Affairs.
- Legislative hearing held on July 28, 2011.

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