

video

Cleary: Seal hunt debate has finally started

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Embraced by animal welfare activists after he questioned whether the Canadian seal hunt is commercially viable, New Democrat MP Ryan Cleary says he is glad a debate about the issue has been ignited.

Cleary outraged sealers and delighted their opponents earlier this week [when he raised questions](#) about the seal hunt, which had a value last year of just \$1 million.

"I tell you one thing I like about it. A debate has begun," Cleary, the representative for St. John's South-Mount Pearl, told CBC's Here & Now.

"For too long, any debate about the seal hunt was taboo."

A former journalist and open-line host who has been proud of his rural Newfoundland roots, Cleary said he also wants a full debate on the future of the fishery.

He also brushed aside the fact that groups like PETA — People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals — have praised him. "Everybody has their own spin on this," said Cleary.

"It's time for us to have a good, solid debate," he said. "Are we going to have this debate, or are we going to watch this industry slowly die?"

Click the video above to see Cleary's interview with Debbie Cooper.