

HOUSE CS FOR SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 14(FSH)

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY THE HOUSE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON FISHERIES

Offered: 3/20/24

Referred: Rules

Sponsor(s): SENATORS BISHOP, Bjorkman, Claman, Hoffman, Giessel, Stevens, Dunbar, Merrick, Kiehl, Tobin, Shower, Wilson, Gray-Jackson, Olson, Hughes, Kaufman, Stedman, Wielechowski, Kawasaki

REPRESENTATIVES Ortiz, Armstrong, Hannan, Stutes, Himschoot

A RESOLUTION

1 **Affirming the commitment of the Alaska State Legislature to supporting small fishing-**
2 **related businesses, families engaged in fishing, and the preservation of the state's**
3 **cultural way of life; and calling on the United States Congress and all federal agencies to**
4 **adopt policies and engage in certain efforts to improve the competitiveness and**
5 **resiliency of the state's seafood industry.**

6 **BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

7 **WHEREAS** small fishing-related businesses, often family-owned, are the backbone
8 of the state's seafood industry and contribute significantly to the economy of the state; and

9 **WHEREAS** fishing is not merely an economic activity, but a way of life for many
10 families in the state and deeply rooted in the cultural fabric of the state; and

11 **WHEREAS** traditional knowledge and practices are passed down through fishing,
12 ensuring that future generations may also benefit from the bounty of the sea, while preserving
13 the state's unique cultural heritage; and

14 **WHEREAS** the sustainability of the state's fisheries relies on the continuation of this
15 cultural tradition; and

1 **WHEREAS** efforts to improve global competitiveness of Alaska commercial seafood
2 have benefits to the entire seafood industry, including harvesters, processors, and support
3 businesses, as well as communities across the state and the state as a whole; and

4 **WHEREAS** Alaska seafood makes up more than 60 percent of seafood harvested in
5 the United States and is a critical part of food production for the United States; and

6 **WHEREAS** Alaska seafood is exported to about 100 countries around the globe; and

7 **WHEREAS** Alaska seafood is subject to global market factors that directly affect its
8 value, whether sold in the United States or exported; and

9 **WHEREAS** Alaska seafood currently faces extraordinary national and global
10 challenges, including trade policies and nonreciprocal tariffs that favor other nations, large
11 existing inventories, high costs and inflation rates, reduced consumer demand, and global
12 competitors that have lower operating costs and are less regulated than domestic seafood
13 producers; and

14 **WHEREAS** challenges that affect the economic viability of fishers and seafood
15 processors also affect local economies and fish landing tax revenues in coastal communities
16 across Alaska; and

17 **WHEREAS**, compared to other domestic sources of protein, seafood is not fully
18 integrated into federal policies and programs designed to ensure domestic food security,
19 supply chain integrity, and support for harvesting and processing businesses; and

20 **WHEREAS** the lack of recognition of domestic seafood in United States trade policy
21 objectives and priorities results in market conditions that reduce the value of Alaska seafood
22 and its accessibility to global markets, creating an unlevel playing field; and

23 **WHEREAS** the 2023 National Export Strategy issued by the federal Trade Promotion
24 Coordinating Committee includes a chapter on seafood industries that highlights the need to
25 improve interagency coordination and global market competitiveness for domestic seafood
26 producers;

27 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature affirms its commitment to
28 supporting small fishing-related businesses, families engaged in fishing, and the preservation
29 of the state's cultural way of life associated with fishing and recognizes how small fishing-
30 related businesses, families engaged in fishing, and the cultural way of life associated with
31 fishing contribute to the state's identity, the state's economy, and the sustainability of the

1 state's seafood industry; and be it

2 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature supports and encourages
3 efforts by the federal government to create an office of seafood policy and program
4 integration within the United States Department of Agriculture to help ensure that domestic
5 food security and supply chain integrity is fully integrated into the department's policy
6 strategies for domestic seafood; and be it

7 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature urges the United States
8 Department of Agriculture to include seafood harvesting and processing businesses in all
9 programs that support American food producers; and be it

10 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature encourages all federal
11 agencies that affect the economic viability of the state's seafood industry to implement the
12 National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Seafood Strategy and chapter 9
13 of the Trade Promotion Coordinating Committee's 2023 National Export Strategy; and be it

14 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature requests all federal
15 agencies and programs to increase purchases of Alaska seafood in a manner that is
16 economically beneficial to small fishing-related businesses and that provides the highest
17 quality of seafood for American families; and be it

18 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature calls on all federal
19 agencies to help improve governmental programs applicable to the seafood industry for
20 recapitalization, vessel construction, tax structures, workforce accessibility, energy, and
21 infrastructure; and be it

22 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature calls on the United States
23 Congress to increase federal funding for new product development, testing, promotion, and
24 marketing of domestically produced seafood in a similar fashion as the National Oceanic and
25 Atmospheric Administration's Saltonstall-Kennedy Research and Development Program and
26 its associated grant competition; and be it

27 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature requests the United States
28 Secretary of Commerce to include and improve seafood expertise and leadership in the Office
29 of the United States Trade Representative in order to better coordinate seafood trade
30 objectives among offices of the United States Trade Representative, to coordinate seafood
31 trade programs with seafood-related efforts of other federal agencies, and to provide a point of

1 entry for seafood producers to more effectively engage with the Office of the United States
2 Trade Representative; and be it

3 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature calls on the federal
4 government to improve United States trade policy through the Office of the United States
5 Trade Representative and other federal agencies to create a more reciprocal tariff structure for
6 seafood export and import and reduce the burden and risk associated with non-tariff barriers.

7 **COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Joseph R. Biden, President
8 of the United States; the Honorable Kamala D. Harris, Vice President of the United States and
9 President of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Mike Johnson, Speaker of the U.S. House of
10 Representatives; the Honorable Charles Schumer, Majority Leader of the U.S. Senate; the
11 Honorable Tom Vilsack, United States Secretary of Agriculture; the Honorable Gina
12 Raimondo, United States Secretary of Commerce; the Honorable Katherine Tai, United States
13 Trade Representative; the Honorable Richard Spinrad, Under Secretary of Commerce for
14 Oceans and Atmosphere and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
15 Administrator, United States Department of Commerce; Barry Thom, Executive Director,
16 Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission; and the Honorable Lisa Murkowski and the
17 Honorable Dan Sullivan, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Mary Peltola, U.S. Representative,
18 members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.