



April 10, 2018

Honorable Members of House Special Committee on Fisheries

Submitted via email

Dear Chair Stutes and members of the House Fisheries Committee:

The undersigned broad coalition of entities, with very diverse interests, write to share comments with regard to Committee Substitute House Bill 199 Version M (CSHB 199), "An Act establishing major and minor anadromous fish habitat permits for certain activities; establishing related penalties; and relating to the protection of anadromous fish and anadromous fish habitat."

We appreciate your efforts to respond to the concerns generated by the first version of HB 199; however, we continue to question the necessity of this bill and have concerns surrounding several portions of the committee substitute.

Alaska's world-class management of its fisheries is the envy of many other states and nations. This has been reinforced through testimony in your committee by regulatory experts from the Department of Fish and Game, the Department of Environmental Conservation, and the Department of Natural Resources. In fact, the strong collaboration between these departments and the continuous improvements through modernizing standards has been a consistent theme of the testimony on the existing regulatory process.

Like you and all Alaskans, we value Alaska's fisheries. The work of our regulatory agencies has been proven effective at managing and balancing all of our natural resources for the benefit of Alaskans. So why disrupt that balance? We are deeply concerned that this latest version of the proposed legislation will still result in uncertainty, delays, and additional costs for a wide range of activities in Alaska, including community and resource development, with no added benefit to the environment.

We all agree on one point: the current system is working to protect fish habitat.

As a reminder, this coalition includes urban and rural stakeholders, and businesses and associations representing tens of thousands of Alaskans. We all depend on effective and consistent regulatory processes. So at a time when Alaska's small and large businesses have been hit hard by the

recession and our state struggles to manage its fiscal challenges and high unemployment, it does not make sense to grow government with a complex new regulatory scheme with no added benefits.

Alaska has an excellent track record of permitting large and small community and development projects using proven state and federal environmental laws that already protect fish habitat, so for that reason and because the bill still has several problematic sections, we urge this committee to reject the bill.

Sincerely,

Curtis Thayer, President & CEO
Alaska Chamber

Owen Graham, Executive Director
Alaska Forest Association

Deantha Crockett, Executive Director
Alaska Miners Association

Kara Moriarty, President & CEO
Alaska Oil and Gas Association

Rebecca Logan, President
Alaska Support Industry Alliance

Aves Thompson, Executive Director
Alaska Trucking Association

Jeremy Price, State Director
Americans for Prosperity, Alaska

John MacKinnon, Executive Director
Associated General Contractors of Alaska

Sophie Minich, President & CEO
Cook Inlet Region, Inc.

Karen Matthias, Executive Director
Council of Alaska Producers

John Binkley, President
Cruise Lines International Association Alaska

Aaron Schutt, President and
Doyon Limited

Marisa Sharrah, President & CEO
Greater Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce

Neil MacKinnon, President
First Things First Alaska Foundation

Marleanna Hall, Executive Director
Resource Development Council for Alaska, Inc.

Denny DeWitt, Alaska State Director
The National Federation of Independent Business