

HOUSE BILL NO. 207

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY REPRESENTATIVE HARRIS

Introduced: 3/27/09

Referred:

A BILL

FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

1 **"An Act increasing the allowances for injury, disability, or heart attack payable from**
2 **the fisherman's fund; and providing for an effective date."**

3 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

4 * **Section 1.** AS 23.35.140 is amended to read:

5 **Sec. 23.35.140. Limitation on benefits.** (a) Except for compelling reasons,

6 (1) compensation may not be paid for medical care or hospitalization
7 furnished before the ascertainable time of injury, or before authorization in the case of
8 disability caused by an occupational disease;

9 (2) the total allowance for any one injury or disablement is **\$10,000**
10 [\$2,500].

11 (b) The total allowance for any one heart attack is **\$10,000** [\$2,500].

12 * **Sec. 2.** This Act takes effect immediately under AS 01.10.070(c).

FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA
2009 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Fiscal Note Number: _____
 Bill Version: HB 207
 () Publish Date: _____

Identifier (file name): HB207-DOLWD-FF-04-02-09 Dept. Affected: Labor and Workforce Development
 Title: Maximum Benefit From Fishermen's Fund RDU: Workers' Compensation
 Component: Fishermen's Fund
 Sponsor: Representative Harris
 Requester: House FSH Component Number: 343

Expenditures/Revenues (Thousands of Dollars)

Note: Amounts do not include inflation unless otherwise noted below.

	Appropriation Required	Information					
OPERATING EXPENDITURES	FY 2010	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015
Personal Services							
Travel							
Contractual							
Supplies							
Equipment							
Land & Structures							
Grants & Claims		63.7	63.7	63.7	63.7	63.7	63.7
Miscellaneous							
TOTAL OPERATING	0.0	63.7	63.7	63.7	63.7	63.7	63.7

CAPITAL EXPENDITURES								
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CHANGE IN REVENUES ()								
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FUND SOURCE (Thousands of Dollars)

1002 Federal Receipts								
1003 GF Match								
1004 GF								
1005 GF/Program Receipts								
1037 GF/Mental Health								
1032 Fishermen's Fund		63.7	63.7	63.7	63.7	63.7	63.7	63.7
TOTAL	0.0	63.7	63.7	63.7	63.7	63.7	63.7	63.7

Estimate of any current year (FY2009) cost: None

POSITIONS

Full-time								
Part-time								
Temporary								

ANALYSIS: (Attach a separate page if necessary)

This legislation increases the total allowance for a claim that can be approved by the Fishermen's Fund Administrator before it must go before the Fishermen's Fund Council from \$2,500 to \$10,000. Currently there are claims that exceed the current approval level, that are approved for payment and paid up to the \$2,500 limit, but the claimant does not take the next step to go to the council for payment of the remainder of those claims. With the higher approval level some of those claims would be paid to a higher level and thus increase our expenditures. Based on past claims history the department estimates that expenditures could increase by approximately \$63,700. The program has sufficient budgeted expenditure authorization to absorb this cost increase.

Prepared by: Trena Heikes, Director
 Division: Workers' Compensation
 Approved by: Click Bishop, Commissioner
 Agency: Department of Labor and Workforce Development

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 Date 4/2/09



UNITED FISHERMEN OF ALASKA

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April 1, 2009

Representative Bryce Edgmon, Chair
House Special Committee on Fisheries
Alaska State Legislature
State Capitol (Mail Stop 3100)
Juneau AK 99801

RE: Support for HB 207 to increase Fishermen's Fund claim limit.

Dear Chairman Edgmon and Committee members,

United Fishermen of Alaska supports HB 207 to raise the limit of payment from the Alaska Fishermen's Fund from \$2500 to \$10,000 for injury and heart attack incidents that commercial fishermen may suffer while fishing.

The Fishermen's fund is self-funded by commercial fishermen and crew through fees that are included in the license price. The fund is self sustaining and this measure is not expected to change that. The \$2,500 benefit in AS 23.35.140 has not been increased since 1959, and is worth just \$345 today, adjusted for inflation.

This legislation will help the fund provide meaningful assistance to fishermen and crew members injured on the job, as was intended in recognition that fishermen are generally not covered by workman's compensation insurance. We do not support any other changes that might jeopardize the dedicated nature of the Fishermen's Fund.

Thank you for your consideration of our support of HB 207.

Sincerely,

Mark Vinsel
Executive Director

MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

Alaska Crab Coalition • Alaska Independent Fishermen's Marketing Association • Alaska Independent Tendermen's Association
Alaska Longline Fishermen's Association • Alaska Scallop Association • Alaska Trollers Association • Alaska Whitefish Trawlers Association
Armstrong Keta • At-sea Processors Association • Bristol Bay Reserve • Bristol Bay Regional Seafood Development Association • Cape Barnabas Inc.
Concerned Area "M" Fishermen • Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association • Cordova District Fishermen United • Crab Group of Independent Harvesters
Douglas Island Pink and Chum • Fishing Vessel Owners Association • Groundfish Forum • Kenai Peninsula Fishermen's Association
Kodiak Regional Aquaculture Association • North Pacific Fisheries Association • Northern Southeast Regional Aquaculture Association
Petersburg Vessel Owners Association • Prince William Sound Aquaculture Corporation • Purse Seine Vessel Owner Association
Seafood Producers Cooperative • Sitka Herring Association • Southeast Alaska Fisherman's Alliance • Southeast Alaska Regional Dive Fisheries Association
Southeast Alaska Seiners • Southern Southeast Regional Aquaculture Association • United Catcher Boats • United Cook Inlet Drift Association
United Southeast Alaska Gillnetters • Valdez Fisheries Development Association • Western Gulf of Alaska Fishermen