



UNITED FISHERMEN OF ALASKA

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February 15, 2010

Representative Bryce Edgmon
Chair, House Fisheries Committee
Alaska State Legislature
State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801

RE: Support for National Seafood Marketing Fund – HJR 43

Dear Representative Edgmon,

In these difficult economic times, promotion of America's domestic seafood production offers some clear benefits for the country. The national unemployment rate is over 10% and imported seafood represents over 80% of the seafood consumed in the U.S. As consolidation and imports drive prices down, America's fishing families and coastal communities face difficult economic times. ***Broad and sustained investment in marketing of American seafood adds value to the seafood industry and creates jobs domestically.***

United Fishermen of Alaska (UFA) represents many seafood producers in Alaska and the Pacific Northwest. These producers recently saw the dramatic impact of a well-funded marketing campaign. During a five year period, approximately \$100 million was invested in the marketing of Alaska salmon. Marketing projects included quality improvements, infrastructure, product development, and advertising. As a result, the value of Alaska's salmon resource immediately began to rise. Ex-vessel values rose 177%, first wholesale values rose 83%, and the value increases have been sustained over time. As the industry began to be profitable again, economic activity and tax revenues also increased across local, regional, state and federal levels.

As the Alaska salmon example demonstrates, investment in marketing of domestic seafood creates economic development and jobs in U.S. communities and energizes the U.S. seafood industry which is based on a healthy and renewable resource.

UFA is now working with seafood producers from around the country to form a National Seafood Marketing Coalition (Coalition). The goal of this Coalition is to create, through federal legislation, a National Seafood Marketing Fund, through a portion of the import duties and antidumping/countervailing duties collected on fish and fish products. The

legislation would also create nine regional seafood marketing boards to manage and direct marketing activities. Attached is a general outline of the proposal to create a National Seafood Marketing Fund.

UFA requests your support for the Coalition's efforts to secure federal funding for domestic marketing of U.S. seafood which will grow the economy, create jobs and energize the U.S. seafood industry.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark D. Vinsel". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a white background.

Mark Vinsel
Executive Director

Attachment