



## Southwest Alaska Municipal Conference

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Alaska Peninsula  
Aleutian Chain  
Bristol Bay  
Kodiak Island  
Pribilof Islands

February 13, 2009

Representative Bryce Edgmon, Chairman  
House Special Committee on Fisheries  
State Capitol, Room 416  
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Re: House Bill 20

Dear Representative Edgmon,

The Southwest Alaska Municipal Conference (SWAMC) lends its support to House Bill 20. This bill comes at an opportune time to address the energy cost concerns of the state's commercial fisheries. Last year saw many boats opt to stay in port because the cost of fuel was so high it made it unprofitable to leave port and fish.

SWAMC supports efforts by the Special House Committee on Fisheries to increase the opportunity for fishermen to access loans for vessel upgrades. HB 20 allows fishermen who currently hold Section A loans to be eligible for Section B loans to improve their vessel's energy efficiency and increases the amount of loans they are eligible to borrow. This bill will help upgrade the state's fishing fleet with 21<sup>st</sup> Century technology and equipment and set it on a solid foundation for the future.

SWAMC is the regional economic development organization (ARDOR) for Southwest Alaska and serves the Aleutian/Pribilofs, Bristol Bay, and Kodiak. SWAMC's regional membership advances the collective interests of Southwest Alaska people, businesses, and communities. SWAMC promotes economic opportunities to improve quality of life and pursues long-term responsible development.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Catsi". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending from the end.

Michael Catsi  
Executive Director