

Southeast Alaska Fishermen's Alliance

9369 North Douglas Highway

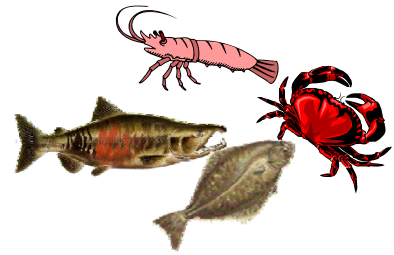
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March 25, 2014

Senate Finance Committee
Alaska State Legislature
Senator(s) Kelly & Meyer, Co-Chairs
State Capitol, Room 532
Juneau, AK 99801

RE: Operating Budget HB 266

Dear Senator Kelly, Senator Meyer and Finance Committee Members,

Southeast Alaska Fishermen's Alliance (SEAFa) would like to speak to the importance of several segments of the operating budget. We fully understand that we are in a period of revenue decline and that hard decisions must be made for the good of the State's financial future. We support strong funding for the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute and DEC's Fish tissue testing program.

The Constitution of the State of Alaska requires management of our fish and game resources on a sustained yield basis, this in turns means that we must fund ADF&G sufficiently in order to meet this mandate. The commercial fishing industry contributes over \$130 million to the general fund. When the resources aren't available to manage the fishery, the result is more conservative management and less funds returned to the general fund.

The Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute (ASMI) is another important agency to the health of the commercial fishery. The Commercial Fishing Industry contributes approximately \$9-10 million dollars to the ASMI through an assessment on the processors in addition to the raw fish & landing tax. The State has been contributing flat funding for the last several years at \$7.7 million. We support continued funding of ASMI to the fullest extent possible. These funds help leverage federal funding and are important to continue the programs that have been established such as the sustainable certification program.

The DEC fish tissue testing program allows DEC and ASMI to respond to requests regarding our seafood and continue to show that Alaska seafood is healthy and good for you and our habitat is still uncontaminated.

SEAFA appreciates all efforts to fund these programs to the fullest extent possible in the face of declining revenues.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kathy Hansen", followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Kathy Hansen
Executive Director