



UNITED FISHERMEN OF ALASKA

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March 12th, 2014

Representative Alan Austerman
State Capitol Room 505
Juneau AK 99801-1182
Via email: Rep.Alan.Austerman@akleg.gov

RE: Support for HB 204, salmon & herring product development tax credit.

Dear Representative Austerman,

United Fishermen of Alaska (UFA) supports HB 204 regarding product development tax credits for salmon and herring value-added processing equipment, and we thank you for the introduction of the bill.

In 2003, the Joint Legislative Salmon Industry Task Force introduced and passed HB 90 for new product development to reverse the decline in Alaska salmon value, and in 2006 and 2008 extended the tax credit. UFA has supported this effort as a way to help processors transition product development efforts towards products that can better compete in fast changing global markets. Since then a variety of new salmon products are competing successfully in the marketplace, and once again our salmon are in demand. Alaska salmon fishermen and communities are benefiting from increased ex-vessel and wholesale prices, and we applaud the legislature for this success.

The global seafood market is fast changing and extremely competitive. We support opportunities to introduce new products and increase the value of Alaska's seafood through innovation and utilization of byproducts. With tightening EPA regulations in Alaska, we support efforts to encourage byproduct development. HB 204 also adds herring products which are seeing an increase in demand in the world market. The changes made in HB 204 address changing market demands by adding the ability to modify existing salmon canning to accommodate smaller can sizes.

United Fishermen of Alaska (UFA) is the statewide commercial fishing trade association, representing 36 commercial fishing organizations participating in fisheries throughout the state and its offshore federal waters. We encourage passage of HB 204.

Sincerely,

Julianne Curry
Executive Director