

# ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE



REPRESENTATIVE GERAN TARR

## **Sponsor Statement House Joint Resolution 5 Oppose Genetically Engineered Salmon**

House Joint Resolution 5 (HJR 5) is a resolution from the 28<sup>th</sup> Alaska State Legislature opposing the United States Food and Drug Administration's preliminary finding in relation to genetically engineered salmon, and urging further examination of genetically engineered salmon before allowing them to be grown, harvested, and sold in the United States.

In December 2012, the FDA announced the genetically modified salmon grown by AquAdvantage in Canada and Panama pose no significant threat to salmon stocks in the wild even though they are notably more aggressive than their wild counter parts. According to scientists, "the FDA's environmental assessment of genetically modified salmon does not adequately consider the growing body of research on genetic and ecological risks and lacks basic quantitative information necessary to verify conclusions."

Alaska's fishing industry is valued at \$1.5 billion annually, and \$3.6 billion wholesale, according to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. Some studies have shown that AquAdvantage fish could eliminate wild populations within 30 years and pose real environmental risks to the sustainability of the fish, and to the pocketbooks of Alaskans.

Salmon farms in Canada, Europe and South America have been criticized for crowded conditions, fecal contamination, use of chemicals, proliferation of disease and escapees. Atlantic salmon have been caught in Alaska's waters, after escaping from neighboring fish farms in British Columbia. Many are infested with sea lice. They are considered an invasive species by Alaskans. The FDA is now considering allowing production of fish that could completely decimate wild salmon populations.

This resolution will send a clear message to the Federal government that the Alaska State Legislature does not condone the growth, sale or release of genetically engineered salmon in the United States. Please join me in ensuring the safety and well-being of Alaska's wild salmon.