



Southwest Alaska Municipal Conference
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Alaska Peninsula
Aleutian Chain
Bristol Bay
Kodiak Island
Pribilof Islands

March 28, 2013

Representative Paul Seaton
Chair of the House Fisheries Committee
State Capitol, Room 102
Juneau, AK 99801

Re: SWAMC Support for SB54 - Extending Termination Date of Weathervane Scallop and Bering Sea Hair Crab Fisheries

Representative Seaton,

The Southwest Alaska Municipal Conference (SWAMC) would like to provide support for SB 54, an act extending the termination date of the Weathervane Scallop and Bering Sea Hair Crab Fisheries.

The scallop fishery provides an important economic contribution to our coastal communities, especially Kodiak and Unalaska where the fleet bases operations. Our communities provide services and supplies supporting this fishery, adding to fisheries diversity, and thus a more stable labor force. In addition to the direct impact of providing goods and services, the fishery provides a positive tax base for local and state government. In the 2012/13 fishing season, over 400,000 pounds of product were landed Statewide at an ex-vessel value of approximately \$4,000,000. This money flowed to crew members, owners and vendors who live and spend time in Southwest Alaska.

If the current limited entry system ends, the Department of Fish & Game has advised they will be forced to close the state portion of the scallop fishery, as it could be unmanageable in an open access scenario. This would cause avoidable economic loss to our region and the state. SB54 has the support of Governor Parnell, the Senate, the Department of Fish and Game, United Fishermen of Alaska and now SWAMC, due to the importance of maintaining healthy fisheries in our region.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andy Varner". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Andy Varner
Executive Director