

UNITED SOUTHEAST ALASKA GILLNETTERS

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February 21, 2016

Representative Louise Stutes
Chair, House Fisheries Committee
State Capitol Room 416
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Chairwoman Stutes and Committee Members:

United Southeast Alaska Gillnetters represents the interests of a viable Southeast salmon gillnet fishery. Any additional fisheries tax increases will affect all 473 Southeast drift permit holders, their families and the communities they reside. Our mission is to protect, serve and enhance the Southeast Alaska salmon gillnet fleet.

We are concerned about Alaska's fiscal problems and wish to offer constructive feedback towards solutions. To do so however, larger dollar-generating items such as the proposed use of the Permanent Fund and the initiation of an income tax, need development before we can accurately analyze and comment on taxes to our industry and membership. We would like to answer for instance, "How much more money would a gillnetter and father of two in Sitka be expected to pay with all the proposed taxes?"

Please note that our lack of earlier response to HB251/SB135 does not mean we support them. The fiscal bills as currently presented curtail our ability to provide you with adequate fish tax proposal feedback. After large fiscal gaps are filled, we can better comprehend how our industry might participate in filling a small fiscal gap.

We look forward to working on this with you and our industry. Thank you for reaching out and for your dedication.

Sincerely,



Cynthia Wallesz
Executive Director