

From: Mary Wood [<mailto:mlwood10@gmail.com>]

Sent: Friday, April 10, 2015 11:46 AM

Subject: Got Fish?

Dear members of the House Resources Committee,

I live in Sitka and have been very active in the Fish to Schools Program. I believe in the future of our community and think that Fish to Schools is a way to ensure community resiliency. Giving kids an option to eat local fish and teaching them about local food helps young people to understand the importance of supporting their local economy and advocating for the health of our ecosystems. I've seen firsthand how the program has inspired Alaskan youth to eat locally and connect with local fishermen. I've watched the program expand to all the schools in our small coastal community and believe it is possible for all communities across Alaska to do the same.

With massive budget cuts, we need to think outside the box to continue to feed our students healthy, local food. We have been lucky in Sitka, since the beginning of the program four years ago, to have many commercial fishermen eager and able to donate fish to our students. Not all communities have the ability to have commercial fishermen donating directly to their school lunch program but community members are interested in supporting the health and lives of young people. **I highly encourage you to support House Bill 179.** It will give all communities a chance to feed their people healthy, local food; supporting the lives and economy of our communities.

Thank you,
Mary Wood