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Senator Gary Stevens
Alaska Legislature
Senator.Gary.Stevens@akleg.gov

RE: Support for SB211 – Alaska Fisher Retirement Act

Dear Senator Gary Stevens,

March 10, 2018

We are writing to express our personal ***support for Senate Bill 211 – Alaska Fisher Retirement Act.***

We are a commercial fishing family and own and operate a salmon gillnet vessel in Southeast Alaska. We have collectively worked in the industry for over 60 years.

We strongly support the retention of ownership of limited entry permits issued through CFEC by fishermen. In other words, we would not support absentee ownership of limited entry permits which would allow fishermen to sit on the beach and lease out their permits to others to fish them. However, we believe that allowing for a small amount of flexibility in the temporary transfer of permits to deckhands who are “apprenticing” to become owners and operators of their own vessels and crew is a positive step for the health of the industry.

The Legislature and others have recognized the “graying of the fleet” and this bill would provide additional encouragement for deckhands to progress into ownership of fishing operations. As we personally grow closer to retirement, and our children who also commercial fish, begin to look at investments in commercial fishing, we believe this bill would be helpful to transitioning the fleet to the younger generation in a way that provides them with the skills and expertise which will make them successful.

This bill would most likely be used for transfer of mid to large size fishing operations which require more experience, investment, and responsibility in order to provide all the tools for new fishermen to be successful.

Thank you for this opportunity for input. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call or email.


Gig and Julie Decker, commercial fishing family

Cc: Senator Cathy Giessel, Chair, Senate Resources Committee
Senator Bert Stedman, Senate Resources Committee