

Dear Fisheries Committee Members,

I am writing to show my support for HB 14 and HB 56, which I understand will be discussed today by the House Fisheries Committee. As a Bristol Bay Permit holder since 2001, and a Bristol Bay fisherman since 1981, I consider the Bristol Bay fishery a sanctuary of culture, lifestyle, and a vital economic resource that has existed for hundreds, if not thousands, of years.

HB 14 will clarify and make more specific some legislative protections the State of Alaska can provide to protect the Bristol Bay watershed and fishery from the threat of mining near critically important habitat, and I support it, as well as any legislation that may be considered to offer more protection from the likes of Northern Dynasty and the Pebble Mine Partnership. It seems odd to me that the "conservative" branch of our federal and state government wants to gamble with the future of renewable resources, particularly a fishery like Bristol Bay, which is the world's largest and most important wild salmon fishery. Historically, looking at almost every wild salmon fishery on the West Coast of the United States and Canada, the runs of fish have been significantly impacted and reduced to almost extinction, due to pollution, from one cause or another from human development. I hope the fisheries committee members will do everything it can to keep Alaska's water's clean and free from pollution that is detrimental to its fish and wildlife.

HB 56 will allow more investment in fishing equipment and boats, which is needed to keep up with demands for quality products. Particularly in Bristol Bay, when we are limited to 32 feet, quality is often sacrificed on the older, narrower boats, that do not have the space and room to safely add RSW equipment or the engine power necessary to operate such equipment. HB 56, if passed, will provide more money for fishermen to make investments into the fishery.

Thank you for passing on my comments.

Sincerely,

Erick Sabo

Owner/Operator F/V Alsatia, Bristol Bay.