



February 3, 2020

Representative Louise Stutes  
Chair House Fisheries Committee  
State Capitol Room 406  
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Representative Stutes and members of the House Fisheries Committee,

Cordova District Fishermen United (CDFU) is a membership-driven non-profit organization that represents and advocates on behalf of the commercial fishing fleet who participate in fisheries in Prince William Sound, the Copper River, and the northern Gulf of Alaska. We would like to take the time to express our support of HB 185 "An Act relating to the registration of commercial vessels; and providing for an effective date".

This bill would eliminate the need for an additional vessel registration with the Department of Motor Vehicles as required by the passage of SB 92, and provide an exemption for vessels registered with the Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission (CFEC). Currently, all vessel owners who participate in State of Alaska commercial fisheries are required to register their vessel with the CFEC, which provides each vessel with a permanent ADF&G number. Each registered vessel must also display their ADF&G number clearly and visibly on both sides of the vessel, and all of the data about that vessel and its owner is well tracked by a state agency in a database that has been consistently updated for decades. This database is easily searchable and publicly accessible online, and vessels registered with the CFEC are all well documented by the State of Alaska. Many of these vessels are also documented by the U.S. Coast Guard, a standard that SB 92 initially sought to achieve.

For many vessel owners in our region, an additional registration with DMV was difficult to obtain over the summer months when the requirement was first rolled out. Our local DMV office was closed down for several weeks, and though it did eventually open up during the season, many fishermen were already out in Prince William Sound by that point, unable to return to town to register their vessels without a significant loss of income. Unfortunately, this left many vessel owners out of compliance and at risk of a citation, and led to a great deal of frustration for fishermen.



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We support an exemption for CFEC registered vessels, as this would help to ease the regulatory burdens on small business owners.

Thank you again for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Chelsea Haisman  
Executive Director