



612 W. Willoughby Ave., Suite B
P.O. Box 21989, Juneau, AK 99802
Phone (907) 586-4360
www.seconference.org
Email info@seconference.org
SOUTHEAST ALASKA REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION

March 2, 2021

Representative Andi Story
State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska 99801
Representative.Andi.Story@akleg.gov

Re: Support for HB 115 – AQUATIC FARMING & HATCHERY SITE LEASES

Dear Representative Story,

Southeast Conference would like to express support for HB 115 which is an important step toward efficiently developing the mariculture industry and is a part of a larger plan to fully develop mariculture in Alaska, with a goal to grow a \$100 million per year industry in 20 years.

Southeast Conference is the state and federally designated regional economic development organization for Southeast Alaska. For nearly 60 years, Southeast Conference has served as the collective voice for advancing the region's economy. Southeast Conference has over 200 members from organizations representing business and governments from 32 regional communities. The mission of Southeast Conference is to undertake and support activities that promote strong economies, healthy communities and a quality environment in Southeast Alaska.

HB 115 plays an important role in the development and revitalization of the seafood industry in Alaska. It creates a more streamlined lease renewal process through aligning it with the lease renewal processes of other types of leases. This would subsequently simplify and shorten the process, reduce workload on the Department of Natural Resources staff, as well as provide more certainty for businesses. In addition, this proposed bill also includes reports on the backlog of lease applications, which would allow for more clarity and transparency moving forward.

A leaner aquatic farm and hatchery lease renewal process would diversify and expand opportunities in coastal communities and increase investment in aquatic farming in Alaska. Southeast Conference supports HB 115 as introduced and appreciates your work to provide additional economic opportunities in Alaska.

Sincerely,

Robert Venables
Executive Director
Southeast Conference