

Alaska State Legislature

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Sponsor Statement: HCR 2 Version A

“Supporting the Alaska Ocean Cluster in its mission, efforts, and vision for a vibrant coastal economy in the state, its promotion of a diversified and resilient state economy that creates value from ocean resources, and its building of a statewide integrated ecosystem of innovation and entrepreneurship relating to the state’s ocean economy.”

Alaska is poised to be the nation’s leader in mariculture and ocean-based business development. Our state is home to half of the nation’s coastline and approximately one-third of the nation's exclusive economic zone. Major marine and inland aquatic Alaskan industries include offshore oil and gas exploration, fisheries, shipping, and tourism. Alaska’s substantial ocean economy—its “blue economy”—will continue to grow as significant climate and political shifts open the state for more opportunities. Globally, the blue economy is expected to double to an estimated 3 trillion dollars by 2030. Alaska’s importance is undeniable, with the state producing 60% of the United States’ seafood and possessing well over half of the nation’s coastline and potential ocean energy resources.

In 2017, the Bering Sea Fisherman’s Association launched the Alaska Ocean Cluster to enhance maritime growth and development in the state. The Alaska Ocean Cluster actively promotes Alaska’s blue economy by leveraging our current strengths while bolstering new and emerging innovative opportunities to diversify our economy. The Alaska Ocean Cluster focuses on expanding ocean energy production, mariculture, and transportation opportunities. Modeled after similar successful similar ventures from around the world, the Alaska Ocean Cluster brings together a coalition of private, public, and academic shareholders to support each other through cooperative research and a shared vision.

The recent decline in financial resources in Alaska warrants a renewed effort to develop a diversified and resilient economy and workforce in the state. In this regard, Alaska Ocean Cluster will help position the state to grow Alaska's blue economy into the future. This resolution proclaims the 32nd Alaska State Legislature’s support for the efforts of the Alaska Ocean Cluster in developing a sustainable, collaborative ocean economy in our state.