



# Bering Sea Fishermen's Association

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April 7, 2021

Speaker of the Alaska House of Representatives  
Representative Stutes  
State Capitol, Room 208  
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

RE: HCR 2 - SUPPORTING ALASKA OCEAN CLUSTER

Dear Speaker Stutes:

Bering Sea Fishermen's Association (BSFA) is in full support of HCR 2 in service of Alaska's blue economy. BSFA created the Alaska Ocean Cluster (AOC) in 2017 to promote and enhance maritime industry growth and prosperity in Alaska.

Modeled after experiences in Iceland, Ireland, Norway, and Canada, the cluster concept involves a coalition of private, public and academic stakeholders forming around a base industry and, in the process, supporting both the industry and each other through economic transactions and circulated assets. Capturing greater economic value from local and sustainable ocean resources is an opportunity of increasing importance as Alaska's economy recedes into a deeper recession.

BSFA serves 128 communities in the Bristol Bay, Arctic, Yukon and Kuskokwim regions of Alaska. Since 1979, BSFA has served these communities in the areas of economic development, interdisciplinary fisheries research, policy and regulatory design and implementation as well as to incubate initiatives which serve to support capacity development of residents and regional entities to strengthen and engage in their local economies.

As outlined in the Resolution, AOC works to advance Alaska's ocean economy by partnering with other ocean industry growth initiatives and private companies around the state, country, and world. We have leveraged federal funding from the Economic Development Administration to develop programs currently benefitting communities around the state. Support from the 32nd Legislature of the State of Alaska would prove valuable, signifying an understanding of the benefit potential ahead for the State of Alaska.

We strongly encourage passage of HCR 2 and are eager to continue promoting and growing Alaska's ocean industries with your support.

Thank you,  
  
Karen Gillis  
Executive Director

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