

STATE OF ALASKA THE LEGISLATURE

2004

Source
CSHJR 34(FSH)

**Legislative
Resolve No.**
63



Requesting the United States Department of Agriculture and the United States Department of Labor to extend Trade Adjustment Assistance benefits to Alaska salmon fishermen; requesting the United States Congress and the United States Department of Agriculture to extend additional disaster and price support benefits to Alaska salmon fishermen; and requesting the United States Department of Commerce to establish a Trade Adjustment Assistance program specific to commercial fishermen.

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

WHEREAS the United States Department of Labor Trade Adjustment Assistance program provides job search, relocation assistance, and retraining benefits for qualified worker groups; and

WHEREAS the United States Department of Agriculture Trade Adjustment Assistance program provides eligibility for qualified persons to receive retraining benefits through the United States Department of Labor Trade Adjustment Assistance program; and

WHEREAS Alaska salmon fishermen are currently required to show a net decline in

fishing earnings from 2001 to 2002 in order to be eligible for the United States Department of Agriculture Trade Adjustment Assistance program; and

WHEREAS many Alaska salmon fishermen experienced reduced fishing earnings in 2001 due to the decline in the price of all five Alaska salmon species as the result of increased imports of foreign salmon, price-related work stoppages, and closures of processor markets and thus were not able to participate in the United States Department of Agriculture Trade Adjustment Assistance program because they could not demonstrate a net decline in fishing earnings from 2001 to 2002; and

WHEREAS many Alaska salmon fishermen did not fish at all in 2002 because they had been informed by fish processors and buyers to whom they had traditionally sold their catch that the fish processors and buyers would not purchase salmon during 2002 and thus these fishermen were not eligible for commodity-based United States Department of Agriculture Trade Adjustment Assistance price adjustment payments or for United States Department of Labor Trade Adjustment Assistance program retraining benefits; and

WHEREAS alternative job opportunities are uncommon in many of the rural areas where Alaska salmon fishermen live;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully requests the United States Department of Agriculture to extend price adjustment benefits under the Trade Adjustment Assistance program to Alaska salmon fishermen who fished in five of the six years from 1997 to 2002, inclusive, if the fishermen can certify a loss in income from salmon fishing in any of those years due to import-related price fluctuations or were prevented from fishing for salmon in any of those years due to loss of market caused by import-related price fluctuations; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully requests the United States Department of Labor to extend retraining benefits under the Trade Adjustment Assistance program to Alaska salmon fishermen who fished in five of the six years from 1997 to 2002, inclusive, even if the fishermen did not fish the preceding year due to import-related price fluctuations or due to loss of market caused by import-related price fluctuations; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully requests that the United States Congress and the United States Department of Agriculture extend additional

disaster and price support benefits to Alaska salmon fishermen who fished in five of the six years from 1997 to 2002, inclusive, and continued fishing during periods of disaster or market declines by taking the necessary legislative and administrative action to include each species of Alaska salmon as "covered/eligible" commodities for purposes of the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance program, Livestock Compensation program, and Loan Deficiency Payment program; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully requests that the United States Department of Commerce pursue the establishment of a Trade Adjustment Assistance program specific to commercial fishermen.

COPIES of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Ann Veneman, United States Secretary of Agriculture; the Honorable Elaine Chao, United States Secretary of Labor; the Honorable Don Evans, United States Secretary of Commerce; the Honorable Ted Stevens, President Pro Tempore of the U.S. Senate and member of the Alaska delegation in Congress; the Honorable J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives; and to the Honorable Lisa Murkowski, U.S. Senator, and the Honorable Don Young, U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.