

**STATE OF ALASKA  
THE LEGISLATURE**

**2012**

**Source**

CSHCR 18(FSH) am

**Legislative  
Resolve No.**

36



Relating to an examination of fisheries-related programs to facilitate the entry of young Alaskans into commercial fisheries careers and to collaboration with the University of Alaska fisheries, seafood, and maritime initiative.

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

**WHEREAS** the Alaska seafood industry employs more workers than any other private sector industry in the state; and

**WHEREAS**, to continue to thrive, the Alaska resident seafood industry will need future generations of Alaskans to engage in rewarding, ownership-level careers in the industry; and

**WHEREAS** the average age of a commercial salmon fishing skipper in the state has risen from approximately 41 years of age in 1980 to older than 49 years of age in recent years; and

**WHEREAS** the average age of an Alaska Peninsula salmon seine permit holder is 53.6 years, the average age of a Bristol Bay driftnet permit holder is 47.9 years, and the average age of a Southeast power troll permit holder is 53.9 years; and

**WHEREAS**, since the advent of limited entry and quota share fisheries, the financial barriers that hinder young Alaskans in establishing viable fishing businesses have mounted and multiplied, with the cost of some limited entry salmon permits at more than \$100,000 and the average cost of halibut quota shares rising 195 percent between 1995 and 2009; and

**WHEREAS** the overall cost of entry into the commercial fisheries on a diversified level sufficient to provide a viable income for a skipper and crew has increased to at least \$300,000 for boat, gear, permit, and quota shares; and

**WHEREAS** escalating costs thwart the ambitions of young fishers, many of whom lack the extensive credit histories and considerable collateral assets needed to secure substantial bank loans; and

**WHEREAS** a modern commercial fishing operation requires an operator to possess business savvy and a sophisticated understanding of regulatory processes, as well as the ability to engage with federal and state fisheries policy makers; and

**WHEREAS** barriers faced by young people in the state seeking to acquire ownership of fisheries operations play a significant role in the drain of limited entry permits and fishery quota shares from coastal communities and contribute to increasing ownership of fisheries permits and businesses in the state by nonresidents; and

**WHEREAS** programs of the commercial fishing revolving loan fund in the Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development seek to promote the development of predominantly resident fisheries in the state; and

**WHEREAS** the office of fisheries development in the Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development provides a wide variety of resources designed to spur fisheries-related economic development; and

**WHEREAS** the Alaska sea grant marine advisory program, which is funded in part by the legislature through the University of Alaska, provides young Alaskans with education and training in fisheries business financial management, seafood direct marketing, state and federal regulatory processes, and effective public speaking before regulatory bodies; and

**WHEREAS**, to varying degrees, high schools and postsecondary educational institutions in the state offer classes in fisheries skill sets and nautical sciences; and

**WHEREAS** the University of Alaska Fairbanks offers a bachelor of arts degree in fisheries to provide students with a knowledge base, skill set, and practical experience to be

highly competitive in obtaining rewarding employment in the state's fishing industry, and the University of Alaska Southeast fisheries technology program exposes young people to promising careers in commercial fishing and offers programs in aquaculture and fisheries management; and

**WHEREAS** the graying of the fleet in the state continues unabated; and

**WHEREAS**, in June 2011, University of Alaska President Patrick Gamble created the allied fisheries working group as a cross-campus initiative to assess and enhance the development of programs, courses, research, and information that meet the employment needs of the fisheries, seafood, and maritime industries; and

**WHEREAS** the allied fisheries working group was established to sustain and enhance the economy and the communities in the state by developing education and training that supports a responsive work force and enables the fishing, seafood, and maritime industries to continue to be vibrant and substantial contributors to the state; and

**WHEREAS** the allied fisheries working group was established to assist Alaskans, particularly young Alaskans, to discover and prepare for the wide range of employment opportunities in the fishing, seafood, and maritime industries; and

**WHEREAS**, in the latest phase of University of Alaska's initiative, the university has joined the fishing industry, government, and Rasmuson Foundation participants to create the University of Alaska fisheries, seafood, and maritime initiative; and

**WHEREAS** the goals of the University of Alaska fisheries, seafood, and maritime initiative align closely with the Alaska State Legislature's objective to turn the tide on the graying of the fleet by strengthening programs and providing resources to facilitate the entry of young Alaskans into gainful, lifelong, ownership-level commercial fishing careers;

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature endorses and encourages the continuing work of the University of Alaska fisheries, seafood, and maritime initiative; and be it

**FURTHER RESOLVED** that the president of the senate shall appoint one senator and the speaker of the house of representatives shall appoint one representative as liaisons to the University of Alaska fisheries, seafood, and maritime initiative so that the Alaska State Legislature is kept well apprised of the initiative's progress; and be it

**FURTHER RESOLVED** that the legislators appointed as liaisons to the University

of Alaska fisheries, seafood, and maritime initiative shall provide quarterly reports to the legislature on the initiative's progress; and be it

**FURTHER RESOLVED** that, by January 20, 2013, the legislators appointed as liaisons to the University of Alaska fisheries, seafood, and maritime initiative shall submit recommendations to the legislature regarding ways in which the legislature may effectively contribute to the initiative.

**A COPY** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Patrick Gamble, President of the University of Alaska.