



February 22, 2024

Senators Lyman Hoffman, Donald Olson, and Bert Stedman
Chairs, Senate Finance Committee
Alaska State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska 99801

RE: SJR 14 – Support State Seafood Industry

Dear Chairs Hoffman, Olson, and Stedman, and members of the Senate Finance Committee:

Alaska's seafood industry is a pillar of the state's economy, a source of pride for Alaskans, and responsibly harvests a wild and sustainable resource to help feed the world. Yet it faces incredible challenges due to a collision of market forces, from local to global, that are responsible for some of the lowest prices paid to fishermen in decades. To help Alaska's fishermen, processors, and other seafood related businesses overcome these challenges, the Alaska seafood industry simply asks for fair treatment by federal agencies, like those given to other agricultural products. SJR 14 encapsulates requests from the Alaska seafood industry and as a result the Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute (ASMI) strongly supports the passage of SJR 14.

Every year, the Alaska seafood industry harvests around 5 to 6 billion pounds of seafood, employs almost 50,000 people, and creates \$6 billion in economic impact in Alaska and almost \$16 billion nationally. While the domestic U.S. is the largest market for Alaska seafood, nearly 70% of Alaska's harvest by value (and 80% by weight) is exported to countries around the world. It is critical the USDA, NOAA, and the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative provide support for Alaska and U.S. seafood similar to how they provide support for other agricultural products and land-based proteins, which is currently not the case. SJR 14 outlines tangible and reasonable changes to federal policy, which would provide equity and fairness to Alaska and U.S. seafood products in a competitive global market.

There are significant market forces negatively impacting Alaskan fishermen and the Alaska seafood industry. ASMI is working tirelessly to increase demand for Alaska seafood, however, needed changes to federal policy contained in SJR 14 would provide additional help to the industry during these extremely challenging times. ASMI encourages the Alaska Legislature to continue its support for the Alaska seafood industry by supporting SJR14.

Sincerely,

Jeremy Woodrow
Executive Director