

March 07, 2018

Dear Senator Stevens,

SB211 will clearly help facilitate the generational succession of Alaska's commercial fisheries onto a new generation of fishermen.

Among the public at large, there is a growing desire to see young Alaskan fishermen have more upwardly mobile opportunities to becoming owners in Alaska's commercial fisheries. There is also a developing desire of baby boomer generation fishermen who have had life time careers in the industry to retire from commercial fishing with dignity and grace over time and without the economic uncertainties of a onetime sell out.

There is no shortage of willing young fishermen looking for opportunities to advance their careers, but find the price of entry daunting without the opportunity to advance from first time deck-hand (*apprentice*) and experienced crewman (*journeyman*) to a point where they may develop the skills and confidence to take on debt and commit to fishing as an owner (*master*).

SB211 addresses the problems of training and access by providing young fishermen who desire upward mobility, a program that encourages opportunity, enables advanced training and applied, real-time experience.

SB211 does not require a complicated rewrite of the Limited Entry statutes, but simply amends the section pertaining to the medical and emergency transfer authorities and broadens the existing registry to include this new, limited qualification for our "graduating" masters. It is apparent to me that the specific intention of this Act is to amend existing statute to provide the opportunity of upward mobility for young fishermen and is in no manner intended to violate or change the standing prohibition against absentee ownership, the active leasing of permits or as a way to fish in multiple areas at the same time.

This Act adds no additional gear to the fishery and considers the safety of all by providing regulation to insure the safety of the crew, the vessel and the fishery resource. SB211 is truly a modern training program that is further providing for monitoring and active participation by the boat's master and a defined time period and process for effective enforcement.

In consideration of our young fishermen and the fishermen that will soon need to be succeeded, and who broadly support this bill, I urge you and your colleagues in the Senate to pass this through the committee process to the Floor for a positive vote in favor of SB211.

Regards,

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