

Dear Alaska House Fisheries Committee,

I am writing in strong opposition to HB 111/ SB 108: Finfish Farms and Products. Alaska's wild fisheries are significant in supporting Alaska Native communities, filling our freezers, and driving our economy. Allowing non-native fish species to be farmed here poses a grave risk to our wild stocks, even in "contained" environments.

I spent a year interviewing and producing an award winning documentary called THE BREACH about our last wild salmon runs which includes fish farming as a serious danger to the species already in Canada. This is a sad day in the history of Alaska and the history of salmon on this planet when wild fish are treated as though they are poultry.

Diseases can be spread by airborne vectors such as birds or during potential escape from enclosures such as floods or negligence. The rearing of farm fish in Alaska would also directly undermine efforts to market the unique taste and nutritional benefits of Alaska wild fisheries and directly compete in the marketplace with small boat harvesters. If the state legislature allows fish farming of non-salmon species, this would only make it easier for salmon farming to become a reality in the future. Please do not allow fish farming in Alaska and instead prioritize wild stocks when it comes to our food security. A renewed focus on sound management and protection of the spawning and rearing habitat of salmon and other species is the most effective and beneficial way of enhancing Alaska's food security. Please reject HB 111.

When non-native fish farms are allowed we know from experience that there will be a failure and these species will become a problem for our precious and valuable fishery. Why are we playing roulette with this idea? This doesn't just affect the Alaskan fishing industry as we all know that fish do not migrate up and down the coast and respect the boundaries of Alaska. Such a bad idea!

Sincerely,

Susan LaSalle

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