

Dear Alaska House Fisheries Committee,

I am writing in strong opposition to HB 111: 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.

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.

As a former longtime commercial fisherman in Alaska, I have seen the impacts of this risky practice over many years. So many individuals and entities are already prioritizing short-term fiscal reward at the expense of Alaska Native communities, coastal Alaska's small boat fleets, and the pristine habitats that had historically been unfettered by dirty fish farms.

It seems clear that full-bore resource extraction and exploitation is the objective of current legislators and corporate entities - at any cost including harsh environmental degradation. Please don't allow HB 111 to go forward! Thank you so much for your time and consideration for this critical moment in Alaska.

Sincerely,

Deb Corso

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