

Chair Stutes & House Fisheries Committee
Alaska State Legislature
State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801
Rep.Louise.Stutes@akleg.gov



Re: Support for HB 300

March 23, 2016

Dear Chair Stutes and House Fisheries Committee:

The Alaska Fisheries Development Foundation (AFDF) would like to express support for HB 300. ***AFDF recognizes that HB 300 is part of a larger effort to develop mariculture in Alaska.***

AFDF's membership is comprised of seafood harvesters, seafood processors, and support sector businesses. Since 1978, AFDF's mission has been to identify problems and opportunities that are common across Alaska's seafood industry and to help develop solutions utilizing applied research and development which balance economic benefits with sustainability principles.

One of AFDF's recent projects is to spearhead the *Alaska Mariculture Initiative*, which is meant to expedite the development of mariculture in Alaska with the vision to grow a \$1 billion industry in 30 years. Governor Walker's recent Administrative Order #280 establishes the ***Alaska Mariculture Task Force*** and is also part of this larger effort to develop mariculture. The purpose of the Task Force is to provide recommendations for a comprehensive plan to develop a viable and sustainable mariculture industry producing shellfish and aquatic plants for the long-term benefit of Alaska's economy, environment, and communities.

HB 300 plays an important role in the development of mariculture in Alaska. HB 300 creates a regulatory framework with which ADF&G can manage shellfish fishery enhancement, restoration and hatcheries, in a similar fashion as the current management of salmon fishery enhancement and hatcheries. This would allow interested stakeholders to either continue or begin enhancement and/or restoration of species such as King crab, sea cucumber, geoduck, abalone, or razor clams.

I would like to briefly address concerns of negative impacts to wild shellfish from hatchery shellfish. As a Client for the Alaska Responsible Fisheries Management (RFM) sustainability certification program, AFDF has a unique position and

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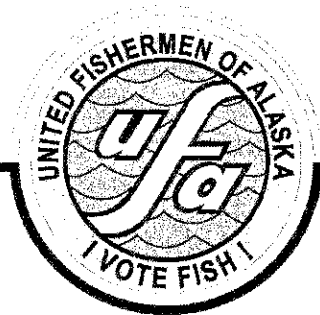
viewpoint on this issue. On one hand, AFDF hears concerns from industry that ADF&G's fishery enhancement policies are too restrictive, increase cost, and slow progress. On the other hand, AFDF is also in the position of facilitating a review of ADF&G's fishery enhancement policies by independent third-party experts to determine whether they follow internationally accepted standards for sustainably managed fisheries. ***Alaska salmon maintains RFM certification, because of ADF&G's policies which are designed around a precautionary approach that prioritizes wild fish and minimizes adverse impacts to wild stocks.*** Following is a list of some of ADF&G's enhancement policies: genetics, disease, pathology, siting of hatcheries, fish culturing techniques, release strategies, harvest, habitat, marking, transportation, planning and reporting. ***Given these extensive policies, AFDF and independent third-parties have confidence that ADF&G is fulfilling its constitutional mandate to manage our fishery resources for sustainability.***

Finally, I understand that a committee substitute (CS) will be introduced at Thursday's meeting that mirrors the latest version of the companion bill (SB 172) which was passed out of Senate Resources Committee. This is our preferred version with changes that improve the clarity and intent of the bill. ***AFDF supports this CS of HB 300 and appreciates the Administration's proactive role in introducing the legislation.***

If there are any questions, I am happy to answer them. Thank you for your consideration of this bill.

Sincerely,


Julie Decker, Executive Director



UNITED FISHERMEN OF ALASKA

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March 22, 2016

Representative Louise Stutes, Chair
House Special Committee on Fisheries
Alaska State Legislature
State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801

Re: Support for HB 300 regarding shellfish enhancement

Dear Representative Stutes and Committee Members,

United Fishermen of Alaska is the statewide commercial fishing trade association, representing 34 commercial fishing organizations participating in fisheries throughout the state and its offshore federal waters.

Although we include eight salmon aquaculture associations that will each be subject to the increase of their fee on new hatchery facilities to \$1000, we support HB 300 because of the broader need to help develop shellfish aquaculture beyond only producing broodstock. Another UFA member group represents shellfish dive fisheries and is actively working with the Alutiiq Pride Shellfish Hatchery to spawn sea cucumbers as a part of ongoing research into production of juveniles to support enhancement of wild sea cucumber populations.

UFA strongly supports Alaska's salmon enhancement programs that are carefully regulated to provide salmon for common property harvest by subsistence, sport and commercial fisheries without detriment to wild stocks. We believe the state can carefully develop opportunities for additional enhancement of shellfish, and passage of HB 300 will help in this effort.

Thank you for your consideration.

Jerry McCune
President

Mark Vinsel
Executive Administrator

MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

Alaska Bering Sea Crabbers • Alaska Independent Fishermen's Marketing Association
Alaska Independent Tendermen's Association • Alaska Longline Fishermen's Association • Alaska Scallop Association • Alaska Trollers Association
Alaska Whitefish Trawlers Association • Armstrong Keta • At-sea Processors Association • Bristol Bay Reserve • Cape Barnabas Inc.
Concerned Area "M" Fishermen • Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association • Cordova District Fishermen United • Douglas Island Pink and Chum
Freezer Longline Coalition • Golden King Crab Coalition • Groundfish Forum • Kenai Peninsula Fishermen's Association
Kodiak Regional Aquaculture Association • North Pacific Fisheries Association • Northern Southeast Regional Aquaculture Association
Petersburg Vessel Owners Association • Prince William Sound Aquaculture Corporation • Purse Seine Vessel Owner Association
Seafood Producers Cooperative • Southeast Alaska Herring Conservation Alliance • Southeast Alaska Fisherman's Alliance
Southeast Alaska Regional Dive Fisheries Association • Southeast Alaska Seiners • Southern Southeast Regional Aquaculture Association
United Cook Inlet Drift Association • United Southeast Alaska Gillnetters • Valdez Fisheries Development Association

Support HB 300
PO Box 232 Petersburg, AK 99833

Petersburg Vessel Owner's Association
(907) 772-9323 email: pvoa@gci.net

March 23, 2016

Representative Stutes
Chair, House Fisheries Committee

Alaska State Legislature
State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99811-1182
Email: Rep.Louise.Stutes@akleg.gov

**RE: Support HB 300-An Act relating to management of enhanced stocks of fish;
authorizing the operation of nonprofit shellfish hatcheries...**

Dear Chair Stutes and Committee Members,

Petersburg Vessel Owner's Association (PVOA) is composed of almost 100 members participating in a wide variety of species and gear type fisheries. An additional thirty businesses supportive to our industry are members. PVOA members fish throughout Alaska from Southeast to the Bering Sea. Targeted species include salmon, herring, halibut, sablefish, cod, crab, shrimp, pollock, tuna, geoduck, and sea cucumber.

Petersburg Vessel Owner's Association is in support of an opportunity for nonprofit organizations to enhance shellfish stocks.

Our organization followed some of the progress of the shellfish enhancement activities of the Alaska King Crab Research, Rehabilitation and Biology (AKCRRAB) program. It has come to our attention that the program has out lived it's developmental permitting and that this bill would allow them to continue their work.

However, we question the term "hatchery," since they are seeking permitting for shellfish enhancement projects not in the form of the traditional sense of a hatchery. We believe the term may confuse the public.

PVOA supports the increase in permitting fee from \$100 to \$1,000. We heard how expensive and time consuming it is for the Alaska Department of Fish and Game to process enhancement permitting and the increase seems appropriate. Thank you for considering our comments.

Respectfully,

Megan O'Neil

Megan O'Neil
Executive Director

March 24, 2016

Representative Louise Stutes, Chair
House Fisheries Committee
Alaska State Legislature
State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801

Re: Support for HB 300

Dear Representative Stutes and Committee members:

The Steering Committee of the Alaska King Crab Research, Rehabilitation and Biology (AKCRRAB) program would like to express appreciation and support for House Bill 300, version W.

The AKCRRAB program is a coalition of university, federal and stakeholder groups, formed in 2006 with the goals of adding to the scientific understanding of crab life history and ecology, as well as the eventual rehabilitation of depressed king crab stocks in Alaska. AKCRRAB is developing scientifically sound strategies for hatching, rearing and outplanting king crab in Alaska, in order to help restore populations to self-sustainable levels.

In phase one, from 2006 to 2011, AKCRRAB researchers made significant accomplishments in developing and improving methods of hatchery rearing of larval and juvenile king crab from wild-caught broodstock, to the point where large-scale production is feasible. Parallel field and laboratory studies of crab ecology and population genetics were also conducted during this time.

In the second and current phase, hatchery studies have been complemented by studies essential to understanding optimal release strategies, appropriate habitat, and potential impact on existing ecosystems. This research is providing the science necessary for informing the responsible release of hatchery-reared animals. Increased knowledge will allow scientists and managers to assess the feasibility of ecologically sound rehabilitation of depressed stocks, with potentially substantial benefits to Alaska.

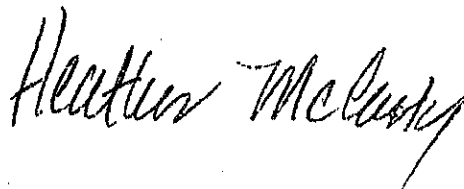
In the third and final phase, AKCRRAB intends to evolve from the current, research-oriented coalition, to a formal entity focused on transitioning

hatchery techniques and outplanting technologies to communities and industry as part of statewide efforts to help rehabilitate depleted king crab stocks. As phase three develops, the program will require support and guidance from the State of Alaska, as the transition from feasibility to implementation will need to be guided with a new regulatory structure.

House Bill 300, as aligned with the recent Senate Resources Committee Substitute for Senate Bill 172, is a response to the need for new regulations for shellfish culture. The AKCRRAB Steering Committee is pleased that the Administration and the Legislature are addressing this need. In a preliminary review of the proposed legislation, the original version of Senate Bill 172, we identified several areas of concern for AKCRRAB program participants. We were pleased that our concerns, and those of others, were addressed in the Committee Substitute.

We intend to participate fully in further discussions and hearings on this important legislation. The AKCRRAB Steering Committee stands ready to interact with Committee members and staff as needed. Please let us know how we can be of help.

Best regards,



Dr. Ginny Eckert, School of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences, UAF, Juneau Division
Heather McCarty, Central Bering Sea Fishermen's Association
AKCRRAB Steering Committee Co-chairs

Steering Committee members: Jeff Hetrick, Alutiq Pride Hatchery, Seward; Jeff Stephan, United Fishermen's Marketing Association, Kodiak; Dr. Bob Foy, NMFS, Alaska Fisheries Science Center, Kodiak; Chris Mierzejek, Aleutian Pribilof Islands Community Development Association, Anchorage; Gale Vick, Fairbanks; Ruth Christiansen, Alaska Bering Sea Crabbers; Lauren Divine, Tribal Government of St. Paul.