CS FOR HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 28(FSH)

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY THE HOUSE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON FISHERIES

Offered: 2/5/16
Referred: Labor and Commerce

Sponsor(s): REPRESENTATIVES TARR, Kawasaki, Ortiz, Kreiss-Tomkins

A RESOLUTION

Opposing the United States Food and Drug Administration's approval of AquaBounty AquAdvantage genetically engineered salmon; urging the United States Congress to enact legislation that requires prominently labeling genetically engineered products with the words "Genetically Modified" on the product's packaging; and supporting the efforts of the state's congressional delegation to delay the confirmation of the new commissioner of the United States Food and Drug Administration until the United States Food and Drug Administration agrees to require labeling for genetically engineered salmon.

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

WHEREAS, on November 19, 2015, the United States Food and Drug Administration approved AquaBounty AquAdvantage genetically engineered salmon as safe for human consumption; and

WHEREAS the approval is the first time in history that the United States Food and Drug Administration has approved a genetically engineered animal for human consumption;

and

WHEREAS a large majority of state residents oppose the approval of genetically engineered salmon by the United States Food and Drug Administration; and

WHEREAS more than 2,000,000 Americans opposed the United States Food and Drug Administration's approval of genetically engineered salmon in the largest number of comments the United States Food and Drug Administration has ever received on an action; and

WHEREAS more than 65 retailers, including Costco, Safeway, and Target, have announced that they have no plans to sell genetically modified salmon; and

WHEREAS more than 40 members of the United States Congress have expressed opposition to the approval of AquaBounty AquAdvantage genetically engineered salmon; and

WHEREAS the state has bountiful fisheries that provide wild, natural, and sustainable seafood; and

WHEREAS the accidental release of transgenic fish into the wild could devastate native fish populations and ecosystems; and

WHEREAS a May 2013 McGill University research report detailed findings demonstrating interbreeding between genetically modified salmon and brown trout could occur, suggesting that the potential for similar hybridization between other closely related species could pose risks for wild populations, including wild salmon; and

WHEREAS the research demonstrated that transgenic hybrid salmon can outcompete with both wild salmon and genetically modified salmon, making hybridization relevant to risk assessments; and

WHEREAS, each year, thousands of salmon escape from open water net pens into the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans, demonstrating that escapement is a serious threat to wild fish populations; and

WHEREAS the AquaBounty facility on Prince Edward Island is producing genetically engineered fish eggs and sits adjacent to a water body that is directly connected to the Saint Lawrence Seaway and the Atlantic Ocean; and

WHEREAS the proximity of the AquaBounty facility to the Saint Lawrence Seaway and the Atlantic Ocean puts wild Atlantic salmon, which are listed under the Endangered Species Act, at risk; and

WHEREAS the long-term human health effects of consuming genetically engineered salmon are unknown;

WHEREAS the state's congressional delegation has delayed the confirmation of the new commissioner of the United States Food and Drug Administration until the United States Food and Drug Administration agrees to require labeling for genetically engineered salmon;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature opposes the United States Food and Drug Administration's approval of AquaBounty AquAdvantage genetically engineered salmon; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature urges the United States Congress to enact legislation that requires prominently labeling genetically engineered products, including AquaBounty AquAdvantage genetically engineered salmon, with the words "Genetically Modified" on the product's packaging, as required by state law; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature fully supports the efforts of the state's congressional delegation to delay the confirmation of the new commissioner of the United States Food and Drug Administration until the United States Food and Drug Administration agrees to require labeling for genetically engineered salmon.

COPIES of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Barack Obama, President of the United States; the Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr., Vice-President of the United States and President of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Tom Vilsack, United States Secretary of Agriculture; Stephen Ostroff, M.D., Acting Commissioner of Food and Drugs; and the Honorable Lisa Murkowski and the Honorable Dan Sullivan, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young, U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.