

Alaska Regional Coalition

Representing 165 Alaskan Communities

May 5, 2025

House Resources Committee
Alaska State Legislature
State Capitol Building
Juneau, AK 99801

RE: Support for House Bill 125

The Alaska Regional Coalition (ARC) is a consensus-based coalition of four regional Tribal non-profit service providers and two regional tribes, including Tanana Chiefs Conference, Maniilaq Association, Kawerak Inc., Chugachmiut, the Association of Village Council Presidents, Central Council of Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska, and the Inupiat Communities of the Arctic Slope.

Collectively we represent over 160 communities in Alaska.

Our people have relied on the traditional harvest of fish and marine resources since time immemorial, and it is only right that the board tasked with managing these resources includes representation that reflects those who depend on them.

It is important to acknowledge that the very reason there are fisheries to manage in Alaska today is a direct result of the successful stewardship of Indigenous peoples. For over 10,000 years, our ancestors practiced Indigenous science—carefully managing salmon runs, protecting spawning grounds, and ensuring sustainability through deeply held cultural values and traditional laws.

This knowledge is not just historical; it is living, practiced, and still relevant today. Modern fisheries management must recognize and incorporate Indigenous science, as our traditional ecological knowledge has sustained these resources far longer than Western approaches.

For too long, the voices of subsistence users have been underrepresented in fisheries management decisions, despite the essential role these resources play in our food security, culture, and way of life.

Establishing designated seats for subsistence users is a meaningful step toward ensuring that management decisions are equitable and fully informed by those who rely on these fisheries for their survival, including the economies they support.

ARC greatly appreciates the work that has gone into developing this legislation by Representative Jimmie and her staff. We respectfully urge the Committee to support House Bill 125.

We are ready to do this work with you.

Respectfully,



Melanie Bahnke, CEO
Kawerak, Inc



Richard Peterson, President
Central Council of Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes



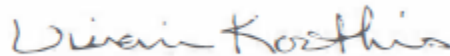
Brian Ridley, Chief/Chairman
Tanana Chiefs Conference



/s/ Tim Gilbert, CEO
Maniilaq Association



Angela Jan Vanderpool, CEO
Chugachmiut



/s/ Vivian Korthuis, CEO
Association of Village Council Presidents

/s/Morrie Lehman, CEO
Inupiat Community of the Arctic Slope

