

March 1, 2009

Representative Alan Austerman
House of Representatives
Alaska State Legislators
120 4th Street Room 3
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Dear Representative Austerman,

I am a nineteen year old, 3rd generation Alaskan fisherman. I grew up in Kodiak and have been going out on commercial fishing boats since I was three and had the chance to go seining in Alitak with my dad. After graduating high school and attending a couple of semesters in college at UAA, I decided to come back home and fish the federal and state cod fisheries this year. In looking ahead into my future, I am interested in pursuing fishing opportunity in Kodiak and continuing my college career in the off seasons to explore direct marketing opportunity.

However, within this plan I am faced with the reality that opportunity for my generation is quickly diminishing. With the way things are looking, there may not be enough affordable entry level opportunity in enough fisheries to achieve my long term goal. The IFQ rights to fish halibut and sablefish are out of my range and I don't expect much to change there. Now there is an action at the NPFMC to further limit the number of licenses to fish for cod in federal waters. It seems this action is driven by the big industry players that made their mark in fishing under open access and now want to lock up the rights.

Where does this leave people like me? Without being able to answer what will happen to future generations that want to go fishing and live in Kodiak, the State should not support this action moving forward. It is not the job of federal managers to look out for the well being of coastal Alaskans, it is the State's. I have attended a few of these NPFMC meetings and found it all so complicated I did not know where to begin. I know that is true for most of my friends. They don't think the direction we are going in fishing is right but they, like me, don't really know what to do about it.

In reading through the resolution HJR 21, to cease the action to extinguish latent licenses and all the reasons why, I fully support the resolution. At this time we need to stand back and answer some of the basic questions, like the opportunity in the future for kids like me, before charging on ahead. I'm willing to go out on the water and work hard to make a living, but there needs to be a door left open to do it.

Sincerely,



Charlie Peterson