



Alaska Conservation Alliance

Uniting for Alaska's Future

February 2, 2009

House Special Committee on Fisheries, Finance
State House of Representatives
Alaska State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Dear Representatives Edgmon, Buch and Austerman,

On behalf of the 40 conservation groups and the 38,000 Alaskans that are represented by the Alaska Conservation Alliance, I am pleased to acknowledge our strong support for HB20 to establish Energy Efficiency loans for commercial fishermen. Alaska's fisheries and fishermen play a vital role in the state's long-term sustainable economy. Alaska's main, non-hydrocarbon export is its seafood. Three billion pounds of fish are harvested from Bristol Bay waters each year and Alaska's Salmon fishery alone added nearly a half billion dollars to the state's economy last year.

With the volatility of fuel prices and with industry predictions of a return to \$110 barrel of oil in the near future, Alaska's fishermen need to find ways to conserve, recycle and limit the energy used in their operations. Recently Japan dedicated \$700 million to improve the efficiency of their fishing fleet. To compete, both in seafood price and in technological innovation, Alaska needs the kind of dedication and funding provided by this bill. Loans to maximize engine and hull efficiencies reduce the amount of high-priced diesel used during the season and result in a higher standard of living for our fishermen, less expensive and more competitive seafood products and less climate-damaging emissions. By giving the loans fishermen need to increase the efficiency of their operation this bill is decreasing the use of unpredictably priced foreign fuel, reducing toxic and greenhouse gas emissions, assuring the competitiveness of Alaska's fishing industry and improving the lives of Alaska's fishermen.

Energy efficiency in all its forms is a high priority for Alaska's conservation community. I strongly encourage the Alaska Legislature to pass HB 20. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Kate Troll
Executive Director

CC: House Special Committee on Fisheries and House Finance Committee Members