



Representative Alan Austerman

Alaska State Legislature

Sponsor Statement for HB 252

“An Act relating to the duty of the commissioner of natural resources to administer and supervise promotional and marketing work for agricultural and aquatic farm products.”

The production of food and food products in Alaska contributes to the economy and well-being of our state. One tool for promoting Alaska’s home-grown products is the “Alaska Grown” slogan for marketing purposes. However, under current Alaska law, oysters, clams and other shellfish products grown in Alaskan waters cannot be promoted as “Alaska Grown.”

House Bill 252 would expand the current efforts of promoting farm-grown products using the “Alaska Grown” slogan to include aquatic farmed, or mariculture, products. This clarifies that aquatic farming products are considered agricultural products for purposes of marketing and promotion. This reflects federal definitions of agriculture, which recognize farmed aquatic products as a component of agricultural production.

Mariculture holds the potential to become a viable industry contributing to the economic security and development of Alaskan coastal communities. Marketing and promotion will be key to this industry’s growth. Shellfish and other mariculture products grown and farmed in Alaska are renewable resources which also promote a healthy and sustainable industry with long term investment in Alaska.