

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

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Charlie Huggins Senator

Sponsor Statement SJR 22

This resolution takes aim at lawsuits filed in the US District Court of Alaska, one by the United Cook Inlet Drift Association (UCIDA) and another by Herbert T. Jensen. The complaints by this commercial fishing group and an individual, calling for a return of federal management is an affront to the State of Alaska. Please, do not forget, here in our 50th year as a state, it was a colossal failure of federal salmon management that was a major driving force behind the statehood movement. I would hope no one wishes to return to such a regime.

UCIDA is an association of both resident and non-resident commercial fishers who participate in drift gillnet salmon fisheries in the inlet. Remarkably, these fishers can keep, for their personal use, an unlimited number of fish from their commercial catch. Their goal is to have the state-managed personal use dip net fishery declared unconstitutional and be pre-empted by federal law. This resolution seeks a fair shake for Alaskans who fish, without commercial gear, with simple dip nets, to feed their families. It asks the governor to intervene in defense of our state's authority to manage its own fisheries in a responsible manner.