



January 27, 2011

Dear Alaska State Representative,

We, the Board of Directors for the Chitina Dipnetters Association, representing the thousands of families that partake in the Copper River Dipnet Fishery, respectfully request your support of House Bill 20, sponsored by Representatives Stoltze, Keller, Neuman, and Johnson and co-sponsored by Representative Thompson. This no-nonsense, simplistic bill is about putting the needs of Alaskans first and ensuring our rights to feed our families, with fish from our rivers.

Article VIII of our Alaska State Constitution was written explicitly to ensure that our natural resources are managed as a public trust. It clearly states that our *"fish, wildlife, and waters are reserved to the people for common use"* and that they shall be managed *"for the maximum benefit of its people"*. House Bill 20 will better ensure that fisheries management is in alignment with our State Constitution and it will also help the Alaska Department of Fish and Game manage our fishery resources *"for the maximum benefit of its people"*.

You will hear a great amount of opposition to this Bill from the commercial fishing industry, as seen when this Bill was submitted as HB266 during last year's legislative session. Much of the written testimony from the commercial fishing industry opposing that Bill centered on how *"personal use and the commercial fleet should share restrictions to meet escapement goals"* and that we *"must share equally in the burden of conservation"*.¹ We strongly encourage you to educate yourself on the current allocation rates if you have not done so already. Commercial fishing fleets of the Copper River Fishery for example, take nearly 90% of our harvested salmon. In comparison, personal use fishermen, and their families, representing the largest user group, take only 7% of total harvest from this same fishery. Calls to restrict the ability of Alaskans to feed their families are untenable and nonsensical under the current allocation regime.

HB20 is a "no-brainer". It is a common sense solution to ending the allocation conflicts between commercial fishing interests and Alaskans choosing to feed their families with fish they harvest themselves. Please, do what is right for Alaska *and* Alaskans and support HB20.

Thank you for your time and efforts representing Alaskans,

The Chitina Dipnetters Association, Board of Directors
1002 Pioneer Rd.
Fairbanks AK 99701-2818

¹. (<http://housemajority.org/spon.php?id=26hb266> and Additional Public Comments on Subsistence Finding Standard and Chitina Dipnet Fishery March 16-21, Hilton Hotel Anchorage).