

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 25

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY THE HOUSE RULES COMMITTEE BY REQUEST OF THE HOUSE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON FISHERIES

Introduced: 3/14/14

Referred: House Special Committee on Fisheries

A RESOLUTION

Urging the Governor to request that the North Pacific Fishery Management Council analyze the option of including community fishing associations as entities that may be granted catch shares in any trawl bycatch management program for the Gulf of Alaska.

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

WHEREAS healthy fisheries are the backbone of the economy and the culture of coastal communities in the state, affecting fishermen, processors, local businesses, and other community residents; and

WHEREAS, in the Gulf of Alaska groundfish trawl fisheries, the North Pacific Fishery Management Council is considering a bycatch management program that would include a catch share or rationalization program; and

WHEREAS, under a catch share program, the total allowable catch of a species in a fishery is divided into shares, and those shares are usually allocated based on historical participation in the fishery; and

WHEREAS, under a catch share program, each share is assigned to an individual, company, or cooperative, and the share holder is allowed to fish up to an assigned limit; and

1 **WHEREAS**, by providing more control and greater individual vessel accountability,
2 catch share programs can reduce the bycatch of prohibited species; and

3 **WHEREAS** catch share programs can also result in significant harm to coastal
4 communities through excessive fleet consolidation, an unnecessarily high loss of crew jobs,
5 the loss of access to fishery resources for local fishermen and processors, the loss of locally
6 based vessels, and the flight of quota ownership from those communities; and

7 **WHEREAS** the use of legal entities known as "community fishing associations" has
8 been proposed as a means of reducing the possible negative effects of a catch share program
9 on coastal communities; and

10 **WHEREAS** direct allocations to fishing communities were authorized in the
11 Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Reauthorization Act of 2006, and,
12 under the Act, fishing communities are eligible to receive initial allocations of fishing quota
13 or to purchase or hold quota through community fishing associations; and

14 **WHEREAS**, through the establishment of community fishing associations, shares
15 may be allocated directly to coastal fishing communities, helping the economies of those
16 communities by anchoring catch shares in the affected coastal communities and by supporting
17 new generations of fishermen in those communities, amplifying the benefits to those
18 communities over time; and

19 **WHEREAS** community fishing associations are not currently included in the North
20 Pacific Fishery Management Council's framework for structuring a management program for
21 trawl bycatch in the Gulf of Alaska trawl fisheries;

22 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature urges the Governor to request
23 that the North Pacific Fishery Management Council analyze the possibility of including
24 community fishing associations among those entities that may be granted catch shares as an
25 element of any trawl bycatch management catch share program in the Gulf of Alaska; and be
26 it

27 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature urges the Governor to
28 request that the North Pacific Fishery Management Council ensure that any Gulf of Alaska
29 trawl bycatch management catch share program include adequate community protections to
30 sustain access to fisheries for coastal communities, to provide opportunities for new entrants
31 in those fisheries, to maintain the community benefits of those fisheries, including crew jobs,

1 and to protect the coastal economies and cultures of fishing communities in the state.