

BRISTOL BAY NATIVE ASSOCIATION

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Tribal Councils
Served by BBNA:

Aleknagik
Chignik Bay
Chignik Lagoon
Chignik Lake

Clarks Point
Curyung

Egegik

Ekuk

Ekwok

Igiugig

Iliamna

Ivanof Bay

Kanatak

King Salmon

Kokhanok

Koliganek

Levelock

Manokotak

Naknek

New Stuyahok

Newhalen

Nondalton

Pedro Bay

Perryville

Pilot Point

Port Heiden

Portage Creek

South Naknek

Togiak

Twin Hills

Ugashik

February 20, 2013

RE: Letter of Support for **House Bill 49** that creates the **ALASKA CHINOOK SALMON RESEARCH AND RESTORATION ENDOWMENT FUND**

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of the Bristol Bay Native Association (BBNA), it is with great pleasure I provide a letter of support for the **ALASKA CHINOOK SALMON RESEARCH AND RESTORATION ENDOWMENT FUND**. BBNA is a Tribal consortium of 31 Bristol Bay Tribes. BBNA has much in common with its neighbors to the north and partners and supports its counterparts in the Arctic, Yukon, and Kuskokwim regions.

Chinook salmon is an important staple food for the Alaska Native people and others in the Western Alaska. They are also an economically important species for a number of commercial fisheries and a prized sport fishing resource. Chinook salmon stocks are highly valued and essential to the basic way of life in Western Alaska.

Chinook salmon populations have suffered significant fluctuations in abundance during the past 40 years, yet little is known about the factors influencing their populations. Eight of the 14 currently listed "stocks of concern" are Chinook salmon stocks and there are no forecasts suggesting this trend is reversing anytime soon.

A decline in Chinook salmon causes severe hardship and anxiety for the salmon-dependent people in Western Alaska. Limited commercial fishing on Chinook salmon has occurred in recent years and earnings have declined significantly. Poor Chinook salmon returns produce tension and conflict between fishery user groups competing for the same fishery resource.

The bill creates a stable, long-term source of funding for high quality interdisciplinary research such as the Arctic-Yukon-Kuskokwim Sustainable Salmon Initiative (AYK SSI). AYK SSI Research results and information is being utilized in a wide variety of ways to support sustainable salmon management. It analyses escapement goals and helps to gain better an understanding of marine ecosystems. It helps to provide fisheries

managers with better forecasts and improved responses to changing environmental conditions.

BBNA fully endorses the Alaska Chinook Salmon Research and Restoration Endowment Fund. I respectfully request your support of the bill when it comes before your legislative body.

Sincerely,



Ralph Anderson
President & Chief Executive Officer
Bristol Bay Native Association