



UNITED FISHERMEN OF ALASKA

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March 16, 2015

Representative Bryce Edgmon
State Capitol Room 410
Juneau AK, 99801
Rep.Bryce.Edgmon@akleg.gov

RE: SUPPORT HB 128, establishing August 10 of each year as Alaska Wild Salmon Day.

Dear Representative Edgmon,

United Fishermen of Alaska (UFA) is the statewide commercial fishing trade association, representing 36 Alaska commercial fishing organizations participating in fisheries throughout the state and its offshore federal waters. **UFA is pleased to support HB 128, establishing August 10 of each year as Alaska Wild Salmon Day.**

In Alaska, salmon are iconic. Nearly every Alaskan is in some way impacted by salmon. Alaska residents harvest salmon either through personal use, sport, commercial or subsistence methods. Every Alaskan is also able to access salmon in grocery stores and restaurants throughout the state. In addition to a love for eating salmon, Alaskans are also proud of our deep history as a commercial salmon harvesting state. Commercial salmon harvest has been recorded in Alaska since 1878 and is a thriving industry today. According to the McDowell Group, approximately 20,000 people participated in commercial salmon fisheries as a permit holder or crewmember in 2013. All in all, approximately 38,000 people are employed by the commercial salmon harvesting sector in Alaska. Estimated ex-vessel value of salmon harvested by the commercial sector was \$723.5 million in 2013 with over 1 billion pounds landed. Commercial salmon harvesters live in over 160 communities throughout the state.

The guiding issue behind Alaska achieving statehood was commercial salmon harvest. With statehood, Alaska took control over the management of salmon therefore protecting Alaskans dependence on our most prized renewable resource. Since statehood, Alaska has worked hard to develop our reputation as having the best managed fisheries in the world. Starting at statehood, Alaska built sustainability into our constitution:

“Fish, forests, wildlife, grasslands, and all other replenishable resources belonging to the State shall be utilized, developed, and maintained on the sustained yield principle, subject to preferences among beneficial uses.” *Alaska's constitution- Article 8 - Natural Resources, Section 4, sustained yield.*

Alaska is the only state to have written such conservation language into its constitution. This attention to sustainability started with salmon and Alaska continues to set the gold standard worldwide for sustainably managed fisheries.

In addition to our support, UFA would also suggest replacing the word “chum” with the common market name of “keta”. Please contact us if we can answer any questions or provide additional information.

Sincerely,



Julianne Curry
Executive Director

MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

Alaska Bering Sea Crabbers • Alaska Independent Fishermen's Marketing Association
Alaska Independent Tendermen's Association • Alaska Longline Fishermen's Association • Alaska Scallop Association • Alaska Trollers Association
Alaska Whitefish Trawlers Association • Aleutian Pribilof Islands Community Development Association • Armstrong Keta • At-sea Processors Association
Bristol Bay Reserve • Cape Barnabas Inc. • Concerned Area “M” Fishermen • Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association • Cordova District Fishermen United
Douglas Island Pink and Chum • Freezer Longline Coalition • Golden King Crab Coalition • Groundfish Forum • Kenai Peninsula Fishermen's Association
Kodiak Regional Aquaculture Association • North Pacific Fisheries Association • Northern Southeast Regional Aquaculture Association
Petersburg Vessel Owners Association • Prince William Sound Aquaculture Corporation • Purse Seine Vessel Owner Association
Seafood Producers Cooperative • Southeast Alaska Herring Conservation Alliance • Southeast Alaska Fisherman's Alliance
Southeast Alaska Regional Dive Fisheries Association • Southeast Alaska Seiners • Southern Southeast Regional Aquaculture Association
United Catcher Boats • United Cook Inlet Drift Association • United Southeast Alaska Gillnetters • Valdez Fisheries Development Association