

**--Draft Resolution proposed by the Alaska Resource Consortium--**

**Whereas**, the Alaska seafood industry employs more workers than any other private sector industry in the state at 60,000 workers annually while providing them with \$1.6 billion in earnings annually; and

**Whereas**, significant economic benefits resulting directly from activity in the Alaska seafood industry annually include a harvest value of \$1.9 billion and a first wholesale value of \$4.24 billion to the state's economy in 2014; and

**Whereas**, the number of seafood industry jobs in the state that require technical and professional skill is increasing and Alaska is at a crossroads in needing to diversify and expand its economy; and

**Whereas**, in 1974 a group of coastal Alaskans worked together to develop plans for a Fishery Industrial Technology Center to provide teaching, research and service in the seafood industry through the University of Alaska to both citizens and businesses in the state; and

**Whereas**, in 1981 the Fishery Industrial Technology Center was incorporated into Alaska Statutes in Title 16 (Fish and Game) Chapter 52 as part of the University of Alaska; and

**Whereas**, the duties of the Center included creating employment opportunities in the state's fishing industry; providing training to Alaskan citizens in harvesting, processing and conservation of the state's fisheries resources; and provided research and development to enhance the effectiveness and economic viability of the industry; and encouraging joint projects between industry and government in order to use industrial experience and government programs to enhance the productivity of the industry; and

**Whereas**, teaching, training, research and technical assistance carried out at the Center serves a statewide audience, and is primarily delivered by Alaska Sea Grant and Fisheries faculty providing workforce training to 265 industry members, educational opportunities to 25 graduate and undergraduate students and technical assistance to over 70 seafood businesses, tribes and communities in FY16; and

**Whereas**, that Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation has identified the Center and the faculty working in it as "process authorities" for purposes of certifying safety of Alaska's seafood; and

**Whereas**, in 1991 the Alfred Owen Building was built as the home for the Fishery Industrial Technology Center on Near Island in Kodiak. The 20,000 ft<sup>2</sup> facility has 5 dedicated function laboratories, a 5,000 ft<sup>2</sup> pilot plant, 3 freezers plus offices and conference rooms. The State of Alaska used \$10.8M collected from the criminal settlement of the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill to build the facility. In 2011 the name of the Center was changed to the Kodiak Seafood and Marine Science Center; and

**Whereas**, the land on Near Island that the Center is located on was donated to the University of Alaska by the City of Kodiak; and

**Whereas**, the activities of the Center is guided by a 7 member Policy Council composed of at least 5 Alaskan residents including: 2 members representing the processing industry in Alaska, 2 members representing the fishery harvesting sector in Alaska, and 3 members representing the public. As much as possible, Policy Council members represent diverse geographical regions in the state. The Policy Council reports annually to the Board of Regents who provides the report to the Alaska State Legislature; and

**Whereas**, the Center is a unique and well-positioned hub of work that serves many industry partners, The Alaska Department of Fish and Game, The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, The Alaska Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development, The Alaska Department of Natural Resources, The Alaska Fisheries Development Foundation, The Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute, The North Pacific Fisheries Management Council, The National Marine Fisheries Service, The Alaska Department of Education and Early Development, The Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development and other entities; and

**Whereas**, the Alfred Owen Building is a key asset to delivering the program outlined in Alaska Statutes Title 16, Chapter 52, and that the Legislative Research Services of the 29th Alaska Legislature found, in December 2016, that the University of Alaska remains ready to meet the purpose of the Fishery Industrial Technology Center as established in Alaska Statutes in Kodiak; and

**Now, therefore be it resolved** that the Alaska Legislature continues to strongly support the Kodiak Seafood and Marine Science Center (formerly Fishery Industrial Technology Center) as a statewide hub of research, training and technical assistance efforts in support of fisheries across the entire state of Alaska and urges the University of Alaska to find a solution that keeps the Center operating and stable.