



Southeast Alaska Fishermen's Alliance

9369 North Douglas Highway

Juneau, AK 99801

Phone: 907-586-6652

Email: seafa@gci.net

Fax: 907-523-1168

Website: <http://www.seafa.org>

February 8, 2017

House Fisheries Committee
Representative Stutes, Chair
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, AK 99811

RE: SUPPORT HB 56 - "An Act relating to limitations on certain commercial fishing loans made by the Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development."

Dear Committee Members,

Southeast Alaska Fishermen's Alliance (SEAFA) supports HB 56 which increases the cumulative loan amounts available to a borrower from \$300,000 to \$400,000. Since the \$300,000 limit was put in place in 1982, costs of permits and boats as well as gear have all increased, making the raise to the limit a logical move to help a fisherman develop his career. This is an important program to help entry level fishermen/crewmembers enter into the fisheries and to help diversify into additional fisheries.

A real importance of the loan program to commercial fishermen is that this program and CFAB are the only two entities that can use a limited entry permit for collateral. Generally when you go to borrow money you try to use the item you are purchasing such as the limited entry permit for your collateral and a regular bank is not able to use the permit so you are having to offer your house or another item for collateral which an entry level fisherman likely does not have.

This program was originally developed to help Alaskans particularly from coastal communities that had little cash economy help in purchasing and keeping permits in the communities and native villages. **We support this important loan program for commercial fishermen and keeping it healthy and viable.**

SEAFA is a multi-gear/multi-species membership based commercial fishing association representing our 300+ members involved in the salmon, crab, and shrimp fisheries of Southeast Alaska as well as longline fisheries in SE and the Gulf of Alaska.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathy Hansen" followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Kathy Hansen
Executive Director