



# UNITED FISHERMEN OF ALASKA

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April 1, 2019

Representative Louise Stutes  
Chair House Fisheries Committee  
State Capitol Room 406  
Juneau AK, 99801

**RE: HB 65 — Fish Tax: Repeal Muni Refunds/Rev. Share**

Dear Representative Stutes and Members of the House Fisheries Committee,

United Fishermen of Alaska (UFA) is the statewide commercial fishing trade association, representing 35 commercial fishing organizations participating in state and federal fisheries throughout Alaska.

United Fishermen of Alaska would like to go on the record opposing HB 65 – Fish Tax: Repeal Municipal Refunds/Revenue Sharing.

The “Fish Tax”, paid by the commercial fishing industry, has long assisted coastal communities in establishing and maintaining essential infrastructure where commercial fishermen deliver their products to port. Currently, municipalities where harvested seafood is delivered receive 50% of the tax and the other half goes to the State of Alaska. Eliminating the community share would devastate communities that rely heavily on the revenue from this tax.

Much of the shared fisheries tax revenue received by communities is used to help develop port infrastructure, and loss of this revenue source will mean that communities will no longer be able to support the commercial fishing industry by providing an acceptable and safe location for fishermen to deliver their products.

Communities use this tax not only for harbor and port infrastructure, it is also used to support local services such as education. Taking this share away would have a dramatic effect on the local economy of coastal communities.

If passed, this bill would do the exact opposite of what the Governor ran his campaign on – no new taxes. Passage of this bill would create local taxes at the municipal level to cover the loss generated by the fish tax, and hurt communities in the long-run.

Sincerely,

Matt Alward  
President

Frances H. Leach  
Executive Director