



UNITED FISHERMEN OF ALASKA

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January 20, 2020

Representative Louise Stutes
State Capitol Room 406
Juneau AK, 99801

Dear Representative Stutes,

United Fishermen of Alaska expresses our support for HB 185: "An Act relating to the registration of commercial vessels; and providing for an effective date".

We support the reasons behind the Derelict Vessel Bill (SB 92), but we find having commercial fishing vessels register with the Alaska Department of Motor Vehicles who are already registered with the Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission (CFEC) repetitive thus creating unnecessary burden for commercial fishermen and the State.

When SB 92 was first introduced, UFA requested to both Senator Micciche and the Alaska Association of Harbormasters and Port Administrators that vessels registered with the CFEC be exempt from this law. Vessels registered with CFEC are entered into a state-managed database, which is one of the main objectives SB 92 set out to accomplish.

Our fishermen are doing their best to comply under the current law. However, many DMV offices were not ready to deal with the onslaught of this new bill. Several offices throughout the state were lacking proper forms and stickers, and many employees were confused by the new law, giving fishermen wrong information. In addition, many DMV offices were only open a few days a week and some were closed for multiple weeks. Many of our fishermen were already fishing in Bristol Bay and Prince William Sound when word of this new law reached them, and could not readily make it to a DMV office to comply. As a result, the UFA office became a clearing house for frustrated vessel owners who wanted to comply with the law but were having trouble doing so due to the various DMV office difficulties mentioned above.

Adoption of HB 185 will still serve the purpose SB 92 set out to accomplish without making fishermen jump through unnecessary hoops and incur additional expenses.

Regards,

Matt Alward
President

Frances H. Leach
Executive Director