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February 25, 2020

The Honorable Louise Stutes
305 Center Avenue Ste. 1
Kodiak AK, 99615

Via email only: Representative.Louise.Stutes@akleg.gov

Dear Representative Stutes,

North Pacific Seafoods, Inc. (NPSI) strongly supports your efforts to amend the reauthorization of the Alaska's Technical Vocational Education Program (TVEP) to ensure that dedicated funding goes to workforce training for the seafood industry.

NSPI operates several seafood processing plants across the state, employing approximately 1,500 people at the peak season. Our industry faces a chronic shortage of skilled workers to run and repair complex machinery, to manage the logistics of multiple workers and fishermen and to respond to changing markets and growing regulatory requirements.

We understand that the state's TVEP fund sees a substantial contribution each year from seafood workers via their unemployment insurance contributions - approximately \$600,000 per year. Yet, training for our workforce is very minimal in state and the TVEP investment in our industry is about 10% of the annual contribution.

The Alaska Research Consortium (ARC) has recently been assessing workforce needs of the seafood industry. They have proposed a practical and directed statewide training program coordinated from the Kodiak Seafood and Marine Science Center. We support this approach.

We want to clearly express that we have a strong need for skilled workers and that we believe that developing dedicated training for our workforce will support our business and allow us to hire more skilled Alaskans. This ultimately impacts the long-term economy of Alaska's coastal communities and the state overall.

It is only fair and right to ensure that seafood worker contributions be dedicated to seafood workforce training. We support and appreciate your work to amend the reauthorization of TVEP this session to accommodate our need and to dedicate the \$600,000 contributed by our workforce to support training for our employees.

Sincerely,

NORTH PACIFIC SEAFOODS, INC.

Dave Hambleton
President and COO

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