



UNITED FISHERMEN OF ALASKA

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February 23, 2021

Senator Gary Stevens
State Capitol Room 103
Juneau AK, 99801

Representative Dan Ortiz
State Capitol Room 513
Juneau AK, 99801

RE: Support SB 64 and HB 41- Shellfish Projects; Hatcheries; Fees

Dear Senator Stevens and Representative Ortiz,

United Fishermen of Alaska (UFA) is the statewide commercial fishing trade association, representing 36 commercial fishing organizations participating in fisheries throughout the state, and the federal fisheries off Alaska's coast.

In our 2014 resolution (attached), UFA supported the Alaska Mariculture Initiative as a method to facilitate expansion of the mariculture industry for marine plants and shellfish farming, enhancement and restoration, to increase jobs and economic opportunity for fishermen, farmers and support businesses. We support SB 64 & HB 41 to help implement the goals of the state's Mariculture Task Force as a step towards providing new economic opportunity in Alaska's coastal communities.

SB 64 & HB 41 create a regulatory framework with which ADF&G can allow for and manage shellfish fishery enhancement, restoration and hatcheries. This would allow interested stakeholders to continue or begin enhancement and/or restoration of species such as King crab, sea cucumber, geoduck, abalone, razor clams, or others. This framework is essential to allow the development of mariculture related to wild shellfish enhancement.

It should be noted UFA membership includes eight salmon aquaculture associations that will each be subject to the increase of their fee on new hatchery facilities to \$1000, yet we support SB 64 & HB 41 because of the broader need to help develop shellfish aquaculture beyond only producing broodstock.

UFA strongly supports Alaska's salmon enhancement programs that are carefully regulated to provide salmon for common property harvest by subsistence, sport and commercial fisheries without detriment to wild stocks. We believe the state can carefully develop opportunities for additional enhancement of shellfish, and passage of SB 64 & HB 41 will help in this effort.

Respectfully,

Matt Alward
President

Frances H. Leach
Executive Director