

**Simpson Bay Oyster Company**

P.O. Box 2465

Cordova, AK 99574

March 3, 2021

Representative Andi Story  
State Capitol  
Juneau, AK 99801

**RE: Support for HB 115 – Aquatic Farming and Hatchery Site Leases**

Dear Representative Story,

I have an oyster farm in Prince William Sound and I strongly support HB115.

HB115 addresses a real need to streamline the lease renewal process for mariculture lease sites. The current lease renewal process creates uncertainty and undue regulatory burden on mariculture companies and on the State. To get an oyster to market it takes years of labor, equipment investment and good growth conditions; there needs to be certainty of State support to make that investment viable.

It is also important that HB115 creates greater economic opportunity for mariculture lease sites by allowing eco-tours to farm sites. Bringing guests to our farm has always been part of our long-term business plan and it's critical to have supporting legislation. A visit to an oyster farm is a scenic and educational experience, and a great way to market Alaska's bounty.

Thank you for your work on legislation that supports shellfish farmers and Alaska's mariculture industry.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Seawan Gehlbach', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Seawan Gehlbach, Owner