

House Bill 28 – Index of Written Testimony 4.2.21

1. United Fishermen of Alaska
2. Alaska Trollers Association
3. Southeast Alaska Seiners Association
4. United Southeast Alaska Gillnetters
5. Southeast Alaska Fishermen's Alliance
6. Cordova District Fishermen United
7. Alaska Bering Sea Crabbers
Association



UNITED FISHERMEN OF ALASKA

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February 24, 2021

Chair Louise Stutes
House Fisheries Committee
State Capitol Room 208
Juneau AK, 99801

RE: Support HB 28 – Registration of Boats: Exemption

Dear Chair Stutes and House Fisheries Committee Members,

United Fishermen of Alaska expresses our support for HB 28: "An Act relating to the registration of commercial vessels; and providing for an effective date".

We supported the original reasons behind the Derelict Vessel Bill (SB 92), but we find the need for 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.

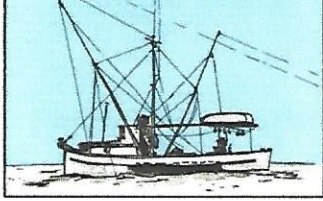
We appreciated the delay in implementation, but the problem still needs to be corrected. As we saw with the original rollout of SB 92, DMV offices were not ready to deal with the onslaught of the bill. Several offices throughout the state were lacking proper forms and stickers, and many employees were 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. We suspect these same issues will ensue unless there is a fix.

Adoption of HB 28 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



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March 20, 2021

Honorable Representative Tarr, Chair
House Special Committee on Fisheries
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, AK 99811

RE: HB 28 relating to registration of commercial vessels

Dear Chair Tarr,

Alaska Trollers Association (ATA) represents the many power and hand trollers throughout Southeast Alaska and up to, and including, Yakutat. Our membership exceeds 400 and is 85% Alaska resident, so trollers are an important and big part of the Southeast Alaska economy. We support HB 28 and appreciate your efforts on it.

As we understand it, the passage of "the derelict vessel bill" in 2018 inadvertently repealed the exemption of documented vessels from having to register at our state's DMV while the CFEC licensing requirement remained in effect as well. With the passage of SB 92, the "derelict vessel bill," fishermen are now forced to register both with both the CFEC and the DMV. This has been confusing and difficult for our owner operator fishermen. When HB 28 becomes law, it will remove the duplication of registration of documented commercial fishing vessels which began with the passage of SB 92.

ATA appreciates the opportunity to provide input to this committee. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Amy Daugherty". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Amy Daugherty
Executive Director



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March 22, 2021

Representative Gera Tarr
Chair - House Fisheries Committee
State Capitol Room 406
Juneau AK, 99801

RE: HB 28 – Registration of Commercial Vessels

Dear Chair Tarr and Committee Members,

Southeast Alaska Seiners Association (SEAS) is in full support of HB 28 and its fixes to the unintended consequences created by the passage of SB 92 in 2018. We believe this legislation eliminates redundancies and over burdensome regulations for active permit holders, without jeopardizing the ability to track derelict vessels as was the intent of SB 92.

Thank you for addressing this issue and its undue burden on the state's commercial fishermen.

Sincerely,

Susan Doherty
Executive Director SEAS

UNITED SOUTHEAST ALASKA GILLNETTERS

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USAG'S MAIN PURPOSE IS TO PROTECT, SERVE AND ENHANCE SOUTHEAST ALASKA'S COMMERCIAL GILLNET FISHERY

March 19, 2021

Representative Tarr
Chair, House Finance Committee
State Capitol, Rm 120
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Chairman Tarr and committee members,

United Southeast Alaska Gillnetters is an organization dedicated to advocacy for the commercial salmon gillnet fishery in Southeast Alaska. There are 473 permit holders, of which over 80% are Alaska residents.

USAG supports HB 28. Passage of this bill will eliminate redundancy in registration for commercial fishing vessels. Commercial fishing vessel owners must annually renew their vessel's license with the Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission to conduct business in the state. For our fleet the annual fee is \$60. CFEC registration includes the owner's name and current address, vessel dimensions, material of construction, horse power, type of fuel, fuel capacity, hold capacity, year constructed and who made it. When a vessel is licensed by the CFEC, it is assigned a permanent ADF&G 5-digit number, which must be displayed on both sides of the vessel in 12" high by 1" wide numbers. The vessel is also assigned an aluminum triangular plate with that same number stamped into it which is displayed on the port side of the vessel in a visible location. A decal with the current year is issued annually with renewal which is placed on this triangle. All the information contained in a particular registration is available on CFEC's public database. It can easily be accessed with a smart phone or computer by anyone. Passage of SB 92 last session required that documented vessels must register with the Division of Motor Vehicles. Passage of HB 28 would exempt currently licensed commercial vessels registered with CFEC from registering with DMV. Our view is that having to register with both state agencies is redundant, unnecessary, serves no purpose or

efficiency, and creates undue burden to commercial boat owners, and for those reasons, we ask for passage of HB 28.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Max Worhatch', with a stylized, flowing script.

Max Worhatch, Executive Director, USAG



Southeast Alaska Fishermen's Alliance

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March 22, 2021

Representative Geran Tarr, Chair
House Special Committee on Fisheries
State Capitol, Room 120
Juneau, AK 99801

RE: SUPPORT FOR HB 28 Version A

Dear Rep Tarr, Chair and Committee Members,

Southeast Alaska Fishermen's Alliance (SEAFa) supports HB 28 removing duplicative registration requirements from active commercial fishermen registered through the Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission (CFEC) with the enactment of SB 92 the Vessel Derelict Act. The intent of SB 92 Vessel Derelict Act was to provide a database to determine ownership of vessels abandoned. CFEC's database is a public, online searchable database that is very user friendly. We appreciate and fully support HB 28 that reduces this duplicative and confusing registration for commercial fishing vessels.

Southeast Alaska Fishermen's Alliance is a multi-gear/multi-species commercial fishing organization representing our 330+ members involved in the salmon, crab, shrimp and longline fisheries.

Sincerely,

Kathy Hansen
Executive Director



Cordova District Fishermen United
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March 22, 2021

Honorable Representative Tarr, Chair
House Fisheries Committee
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, AK 99801

Re: Support for HB 28

Dear Chairman Tarr and members of the House Fisheries Committee,

Cordova District Fishermen United (CDFU) is a membership-driven non-profit organization that represents and advocates on behalf of the commercial fishing fleet who participate in fisheries in Prince William Sound, the Copper River, and the northern Gulf of Alaska. We would like to take the time to express our continued support of HB 28 "An Act relating to the registration of commercial vessels; and providing for an effective date".

This bill would eliminate the need for an additional vessel registration with the Department of Motor Vehicles as required by the prior passage of SB 92, and provide an exemption for vessels registered with the Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission (CFEC). Currently, all vessel owners who participate in State of Alaska commercial fisheries are required to register their vessel with the CFEC, which provides each vessel with a permanent ADF&G number. Each registered vessel must also display their ADF&G number clearly and visibly on both sides of the vessel, and all of the data about that vessel and its owner is well tracked by a state agency in a database that has been consistently updated for decades. This database is easily searchable and publicly accessible online, and vessels registered with the CFEC are all well documented by the State of Alaska. Many of these vessels are also documented by the U.S. Coast Guard, a standard that SB 92 initially sought to achieve.

For many vessel owners in our region, an additional registration with DMV was difficult to obtain over the summer months when the requirement was first rolled out. In prior years, our local DMV office was closed down for several weeks, and though it did eventually open up during the season, many fishermen were already out in Prince William Sound by that point, unable to return to town to register their vessels without a significant loss of income. Unfortunately, this left many vessel owners out of compliance and at risk of a citation, and led to a great deal of frustration for fishermen. Gratefully, this requirement was waived in the wake of Covid-19, but



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we seek to support a permanent change for fishermen who are already adequately documented within a state database. This exemption for CFEC registered vessels would help to ease the regulatory burdens on small business owners.

Thank you again for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Chelsea Haisman
Executive Director



March 30, 2021

Representative Geran Tarr
State Capitol, Room 128
Juneau AK, 99801

RE: Support for HB 28 - Registration of Boats; DMV Exemption

Dear Representative Tarr and Committee Members,

The Alaska Bering Sea Crabbers (ABSC) is a non-profit trade association representing the harvesters of king, snow, and tanner crab in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands region. We represent approximately 70 vessels and are actively involved in fisheries management, policy development, scientific research, and marketing. ABSC would like to express our support for HB 28 (An act relating to the registration of commercial vessels; and providing for an effective date).

ABSC supports this remedy to the Derelict Vessel Bill (SB 92, 2018) by allowing commercial fishing vessels that are already registered with the Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission (CFEC) to be exempt from acquiring a title and registering with the Alaska Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV). Requiring additional registration through the state DMV is redundant when vessels registered with CFEC are already entered in databases managed by the state of Alaska. Our fishermen actively work to follow state laws but found the DMV registration requirements cumbersome, time consuming, duplicative, and unnecessary. Fishermen voiced frustration in having to submit similar information to the state twice, through the CFEC and the DMV, and noted misinformation and confusion from DMV offices, long wait times, and limited open days in which to register.

Adoption of HB 28 will uphold the purpose of SB 92 which is to maintain a record of commercial fishing vessels in a state-managed database while eliminating redundancy and easing the burden to commercial fishermen of Alaska. ABSC supports HB 28.

This position is in alignment with the United Fishermen of Alaska (UFA), of which ABSC is a member.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jamie Goen
Executive Director
Alaska Bering Sea Crabbers
jamie@alaskacrabbers.org