

CS FOR SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 10(FIN)

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY THE SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE

**Offered:
Referred:**

Sponsor(s): SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE

A RESOLUTION

1 **Establishing the Joint Legislative Seafood Industry Task Force.**

2 **BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

3 **WHEREAS** the seafood industry is one of the cornerstones of the state's economy,
4 supporting tens of thousands of jobs, and seafood has a multi-billion dollar economic impact
5 in the state; and

6 **WHEREAS** increased operational costs in the state, high interest rates, and
7 considerable changes in the global seafood market in recent years have placed the state's
8 seafood industry in economic peril, threatening not only the main engine of the rural
9 economies of the state but also a significant contributor to urban economies and is causing
10 harmful revenue losses to the state's general fund and to municipal budgets; and

11 **WHEREAS** decreased consumer demand has resulted in the volume of United States
12 seafood retail sales falling below benchmarks established before the COVID-19 pandemic,
13 reversing substantial gains earned in 2020, 2021, and 2022; and

14 **WHEREAS**, in 2023, global harvest, including the state's harvest and competing
15 Russian harvest, increased supply for many key state seafood products; and

16 **WHEREAS** preliminary data show that prices paid to both fishermen and processors

1 in calendar year 2023 were historically low for many key state seafood species; and

2 **WHEREAS** state seafood harvesters are in danger of being without markets and being
3 forced into economic distress; and

4 **WHEREAS** numerous seafood processing facilities are for sale, closing, or planning
5 to shut down for a portion, or all of, the 2024 fishing season; and

6 **WHEREAS** seafood is a renewable resource that is becoming increasingly unique in
7 the global market and can provide immeasurable economic benefit to this state in perpetuity;

8 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature establishes the Joint Legislative
9 Seafood Industry Task Force to address those elements of the economic crisis in the state's
10 seafood industry that can be solved through governmental policy and action on the part of the
11 industry; and be it

12 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the task force shall develop a long-term vision for the
13 state seafood industry as a critical element of the state's economic future; and be it

14 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the duties of the task force include evaluating public
15 policy options for the state that address

16 (1) means by which government can assist the state's seafood industry in
17 response to changing economics;

18 (2) effects on communities that are severely affected by the economic crisis in
19 the state's seafood industry;

20 (3) ways to improve the coordination of the harvesting, processing, and
21 marketing of seafood;

22 (4) ways to incentivize new seafood product development;

23 (5) ways to improve the marketing efforts of the state seafood industry;

24 (6) ways to improve the quality of the state's seafood products;

25 (7) a long-term strategic plan for the state's seafood industry;

26 (8) the process and procedure to execute limited entry permit buy-back
27 programs; and be it

28 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the members of the task force shall conduct the
29 business of the task force with a statewide vision of the economic crisis in the state's seafood
30 industry and the need to find solutions to the economic crisis; and be it

31 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the task force shall be composed of 16 members, as

1 follows:

2 (1) four members of the legislature, appointed as follows:

3 (A) two members from the senate appointed by the president of the
4 senate;

5 (B) two members from the house of representatives appointed by the
6 speaker of the house of representatives;

7 (2) nine public members who are state residents, appointed jointly by the
8 president of the senate and the speaker of the house of representatives as follows:

9 (A) three members representing the seafood processing sector on
10 behalf of

11 (i) two large seafood processors that own or operate two or
12 more shoreside plants in two or more locations in the state; and

13 (ii) one small seafood processor that owns or operates one
14 shoreside plant in the state;

15 (B) three commercial seafood harvesters who actively participate in
16 state-managed fisheries consisting of

17 (i) one salmon harvester;

18 (ii) one whitefish harvester;

19 (iii) one shellfish harvester;

20 (C) three representatives of fishing-dependent coastal communities
21 representing

22 (i) rural Western Alaska;

23 (ii) the Gulf of Alaska;

24 (iii) Southeast Alaska; and

25 (3) three ex officio nonvoting members designated as follows:

26 (A) the commissioner of fish and game or the commissioner's
27 designee;

28 (B) the commissioner of commerce, community, and economic
29 development or the commissioner's designee;

30 (C) the commissioner of revenue or the commissioner's designee; and
31 be it

1 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the members of the task force shall be appointed to
2 objectively evaluate and support the statewide seafood industry as a whole and not just a
3 particular region or harvesting sector of the industry; and be it

4 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that a vacancy on the task force shall be filled in the same
5 manner as the original appointment; and be it

6 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the president of the senate and the speaker of the house
7 of representatives shall jointly appoint a legislative member of the task force as chair of the
8 task force; staff of the legislator who chairs the task force may provide administrative and
9 other support to the task force; and be it

10 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the task force shall meet at the call of the chair; and be
11 it

12 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that a majority of the task force constitutes a quorum; and
13 be it

14 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the members of the legislature serving on the task
15 force are entitled to per diem and travel expenses and other members serving on the task force
16 may seek reimbursement for per diem and travel expenses from the member's respective
17 organization; and be it

18 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that members of the task force shall meet virtually or use
19 other electronic means to reduce task force expenses to the fullest extent practicable; and be it

20 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the task force shall submit a report of its findings and
21 recommendations to the legislature by January 21, 2025, and may make any interim reports it
22 considers advisable; and be it

23 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the task force is terminated at 11:59 p.m. on
24 February 1, 2025.