



February 24, 2025

State of Alaska Legislature

House Special Committee on Fisheries

Juneau, Alaska

SEAGO Support for House Concurrent Resolution 1: Establishes a Joint Legislative Task Force to evaluate the sport fishing service industry in Southeast Alaska

Southeast Alaska Guides Organization (SEAGO) represents Southeast Alaska’s 300 plus charter fishing operations, roughly half the State’s guided saltwater fishing activity. Southeast guided anglers brought an estimated \$202 million outside dollars into the Southeast economy in 2024, supporting 1,750 jobs and \$11 million in local tax revenue. This revenue-intense industry benefits Alaskans as a primary driver of local transportation, supply, service, and accommodation businesses.

As market demand grows for self-harvest of wild Alaska seafood through sport fishing, managing participation and resolving conflicts among user groups has become increasingly controversial. To address these challenges, SEAGO sought help from Rep. Rebecca Himschoot to draft a resolution establishing a legislative task force to address participation in the sport fishing service sector with a goal to support the long-term stability of all fishermen, and the economics of established fisheries.

A structured and well-regulated sport fishing service sector would benefit all stakeholders, including Alaska sport anglers, commercial operators, independent guides, local communities, and visiting anglers. SEAGO urges state leadership to take decisive action in forming this task force to develop a balanced and practical approach to industry management.

Proactive leadership is crucial to ensure that the sport fishing service industry remains economically sustainable and continues to drive the small but powerful economic engine that Southeast has come to rely on while minimizing unnecessary burdens on other users. Now is the time to implement a solution that provides clarity, stability, and strategic direction for the future of sport fishing services in Southeast Alaska.

Forrest Braden: Southeast Alaska Guides Organization Director [REDACTED]

Kim Landeen: Southeast Alaska Guides Organization [REDACTED]



February 24, 2025

To: Members of the Alaska State Legislature

From: Joshua Badder (Owner) Wild Strawberry Lodge in Sitka, Alaska

Members of the Alaska State Legislature,

I am writing you this letter to make you aware of the challenges we sport fishing lodge owners in SE Alaska have been facing today, tomorrow, and in the near future. Our lodge is family owned and has been in operation in Sitka, Alaska for over 34 years now.

As more and more regulations are imposed on the sport fishing service industry, it is making it ever more difficult to attract sport fishing anglers to our region because of the constant changes and constant reduction in daily / annual limits, size restrictions, and now some closures on the most popular targeted species. These species include Salmon (King), Rockfish, Lingcod, Sablefish, and Halibut.

We have observed a small but noticeable decline in return customers to our area each season. With most clients/customers stating that higher cost, and less fish allotment is driving them to fish elsewhere. It appears that the sportfishing charter industry seems to take the largest loss when new regulations/limits are announced each time. Even though the sportfishing charter industry collectively brings huge amounts of revenue to the State of Alaska, and our local communities.

Please keep in mind the value that sportfishing lodges contribute to local economies in SE Alaska, when you vote and remember your decisions will affect a lot of business owners. I hope that my voice as a fishing lodge/charter operation will be heard in support of HCR 1, as proposed by SEAGO.

Thank you,

Joshua Badder

Owner, Wild Strawberry Lodge, LLC

Email: [REDACTED]



02/23/2025

W. Scott McKelvey

[REDACTED]
Craig, Alaska 99921

State of Alaska Legislature
House Special Committee on Fisheries
Juneau, Alaska

Subject: Establishing the Joint Legislative Task Force on Sportfishing Providers in Southeast Alaska (known as HCR 1)

To whom it may concern:

My name is W. Scott McKelvey, and I am the General Manager for the sportfishing operation known as Waterfall Resort. I am writing you all today to express our strong support to HCR 1.

For many years, there has been outcry from within all user groups within the fishing industry, as well as from local residents of many communities around Southeast Alaska, to have a sustainable entry program for the charter sportfishing industry in Southeast Alaska. The issue that is at hand, is presently there is uncontrolled growth opportunities that is putting tremendous pressure on the precious Salmon, Halibut, and other bottom fish species that are in our Alaskan waters. The result of this continued growth and pressure is making it more difficult to manage these fisheries in a manageable way conservation-wise, that will also have huge economic impacts on the both the State of Alaska and local communities. If sportfishing industry growth is allowed to continue at the rate it is, restrictions will require fewer and fewer fish to be retained by both resident and non-resident sportfisher people. This reduction will cause the sportfishing industry to start to wane, and not only will it hurt the businesses in this industry, but will result in a loss to those involved indirectly as well. In 2024, there was an Economic Impact Study completed by the McKinley Research Team on how much the charter sportfishing industry impacts the state, local communities, and businesses directly and indirectly. This reports shows that there was a total of \$202,000,000 in related spending from the Guided Sportfishing Industry. Of this amount, there was \$11,200,000 paid in select taxes, licenses, and fees in 2024. This is meant to show the impact the guided sportfishing fleet provides. Without control on the growth of this industry, we will reach a tipping point where fewer opportunities will be had, and these economic numbers will start to decline, and all will start to suffer from the result.

It is for these reasons that we are strongly in favor of HCR 1, and encourage you all to act before it is too late.

Respectfully,


W. Scott McKelvey
General Manager
Waterfall Resort

[REDACTED]



February 24, 2025

To: Members of the Alaska State Legislature

From: Justin Karleski (Owner) Wild Strawberry Lodge in Sitka, Alaska

Members of the Alaska State Legislature,

I am writing to you as a concerned small business owner, of a family-owned sport fishing lodge, located in Sitka, Alaska that has been a part of the community for the past 34 years.

Our line of business has been put in the crosshairs, as the regulations seem to always be aimed at the sportfishing service industry. Every year the restrictions on size, quantities of species allowed to be retained, number of closure days, etc., have gotten worse. These increasingly restrictive regulations have been specifically targeting the saltwater sport fishing industry the hardest.

We have noticed a steady decline in trip marketability due to increased regulations which create less and less opportunity. We don't sell fish in a box. We sell the opportunity to catch fish and take them home to share with family and friends. The sport caught species I am referring to are King Salmon, Lingcod, Rockfish, Halibut, and Sablefish.

Towns like Sitka succeed economically from having tourism, and as a fishing community a large part of tourism here is sportfishing. The strict and constant changes in regulations which reduce opportunities (including future in-season management changes), are putting the sport fishing industry at risk. Sportfishing lodges are significant taxpayers, contributing to local economies by bringing in hundreds of millions in revenue from out of state individuals and companies.

I am writing in support of HCR 1 as proposed by SEAGO, because we see that a joint legislative task force is the correct path towards stabilizing the sportfishing service industry in the future.

Thank you,

Justin Karleski

Owner, Wild Strawberry Lodge, LLC



February 24, 2025



To: Members of the Alaska State Legislature

From: Theresa Weiser (Owner) Alaska Premier Charters, Inc. in Sitka, Alaska

Members of the Alaska State Legislature,

I have been a lodge owner and operator in the saltwater guided sportfishing industry in Sitka, Alaska since 1990, fishing for King Salmon, Halibut, Lingcod, Rockfish and Sablefish. I have seen the guided charter sportfishing industry moderately grow and expand over the years as more and more non-resident folks have made SE Alaska their sportfishing destination. We have also seen significant growth of non-guided fishing entities, particularly during the last four years competing for these same species. Both guided and unguided increased fishing effort over the years has created an imbalance between the number of sport fishing service providers and angler allocations. Available resources are being more than fully utilized!

As a result, the charter industry has been specifically targeted with increasingly restrictive regulations each year, including the future in-season disruptive management for King Salmon, now approved by the Board of Fish in the ADFG toolbox. Each spring we wait for announcements of the upcoming regulations, and we wonder what bad news we will have to tell our clients; and what next will be snipped away this season! And when the new regulations are announced, each year there is ALWAYS something more snipped away – every year! Examples are reduced bag limits, reduced annual limits; fish sizes reduced, slot limits and reverse slots both become more restrictive, closures for some species – for part of or for all of a season; day of the week closures for part of a season - has now become a day of the week closure for the full season - first time this year! We say to ourselves: “They put another nail in the coffin!” And it is usually more than one nail going into the coffin! When does this stop? As it now stands, the unpredictability of the regulations each season creates uncertainty and instability for our businesses as we keep trying to market what has become less and less opportunity to attract clients.

This increased fishing activity over the years, combined with dwindling fish stocks of several species, has resulted in harvest opportunity for our guided fishing clients being significantly less and is now affecting the marketability of trips. If these restrictions continue to get worse and worse each year, and nothing is done to stabilize our industry, existing and future businesses will likely experience economic distress and could stop being viable.

The guided sportfishing industry (lodges) has been a strong continuous economic contributor for coastal communities over the years. The economic data has proven this. Reducing opportunities each year has now put the guided sportfishing industry (lodges) at risk. We all have large economic investments in our vessels and lodge businesses! It is very scary to see our sport service industry specifically being targeted and penalized. Something must change. Either increase the allocations for sport fishing resources, which we know is next to impossible! Or effectively implement a limited entry program for our industry - such as has been done for every other fully utilized fishery in Alaska over the years!

I support HCR 1 in the hopes of putting some controls on the unguided sportfishing services, and stabilize our guided sport fisheries, by creating a controlled entry system for the purposes of resource conservation and to prevent economic distress for all our sportfishing lodge businesses and those that depend on guided sportfishing services for a livelihood. *Plus, we want to keep access to the resources viable to all the public that choose to sport fish from charter boats as their way to put amazing seafood on their tables, while making forever memories with their families and friends. As I always say to our guests: “Nobody can take away your memories ever!”*

Thank you,

Theresa Weiser

Owner / Alaska Premier Charters, Inc.

[REDACTED], AK 99835

Phone: [REDACTED]

Email: a [REDACTED]



CASCADE CREEK LODGE

Dear Members of the Alaska State Legislature:

My name is Nathan Kraft and I'm a part-owner of Cascade Creek Lodge LLC in Sitka, Alaska, along with my brother and sister-in-law. We operate a multi-day guided fishing and lodging business during the summer months, and all three of us live in Southeast Alaska year-round. The 2025 season will be our tenth year in business.

We love what we do and are concerned with the long-term stability of the sport fishing industry. During my time as a charter fishing operator in Sitka, I have observed a steady increase in guided operators alongside increasingly strict regulations for non-resident anglers. Over the years, these decreasing harvest opportunities have made it increasingly difficult to fill bookings. Figuring out a way to correct this disparity through a managed entry program is essential.

As the discussion over sport fishing allocation continues, a managed entry program could benefit the industry. The limited-entry charter halibut permit program has flaws, particularly with the leasing of non-transferable permits. Additionally, the disparity in halibut regulations between guided and non-guided anglers needs to be addressed.

The Southeast Alaska sport fishing industry is a major economic driver, and we must do everything to ensure its continued success.


Sincerely,

Nathan Kraft

Cascade Creek Lodge






Klawock, Ak

Members of the Alaska State Legislature,

My name is Josh Anderson, owner and operator of the Fireweed Lodge located on Prince of Wales island in Klawock Alaska. I am a second-generation owner of the Fireweed Lodge, which I operate alongside my wife and two children. During the summer season we operate 11 Guided fishing vessels, providing world-class fishing experiences to visitors while prioritizing sustainable fishing practices.

As an owner and operator of a long-standing sport fishing business in southeast Alaska, I recognize the growing need to implement a program that regulates the number of sport fishing providers in our fisheries. The increasing pressure on fish stocks, coupled with the rising number of charter operators, has created challenges in maintaining sustainable fisheries for future generations.

Without proper management, we risk overcapitalizing, which can lead to increased competition, resource depletion, and diminishing the vitality of our businesses. Ultimately destabilizing the industry and harming the local economies that rely on sport fishing tourism. A well structured regulatory program would help ensure the long term health of our fisheries while supporting operators who prioritize conservation and sustainability.

Thank you,

Josh Anderson

Alaska Rainforest Adventurers, Inc.

[REDACTED]
Thorne Bay, AK 99919
[REDACTED]

Representative Rebecca Himschoot
State Capitol Building, Room 411
Juneau, AK 99801

February 24, 2025

Dear Representative Himschoot,

I am writing to you today as the President of a charter fishing business on the east side of Prince of Wales Island in Thorne Bay. I am a one boat, one operator operation. I am also the Secretary of the Thorne Bay Fisheries Association and a member of the East POWAC. The purpose of my letter is to support HCR1.

In the past twenty years I have been able to see changes in fish stocks and not for the better. There has been a general decrease in salmon, halibut and other preferred species. At the same time there have been moderate increases in the sport-fishing effort.

I am seeing decreased opportunity for clients that come to fish with me in Clarence Strait. Bag and possession limits have been steadily reduced to protect the stocks which is good, but it has reduced the interest of many potential clients. Compound all of that with unrestricted entry into the sport-fishing service industry and there is potential for serious challenges for all existing and potential businesses in the future.

I believe it is time to have a serious discussion about putting limits on entry into the industry to protect it's future viability.

Thank you for your time,



David Egelston
President

From: Grantley Moore [REDACTED]

Sent: Monday, March 10, 2025 10:23 PM

To: Grantley Moore [REDACTED]

Subject: Regarding my Opposition to HCR1 and the Formation of a Task Force on Limited Entry for the Charter Industry.

Dear representatives and house chair,

I have 6 charter boats here in Juneau Alaska and provide many jobs to so many locals and spend a tremendous amount here locally in Juneau.

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the formation of a Task Force to address a Limited Entry program for the charter industry in Southeast Alaska, as prescribed in HCR1. The implementation of such a program would have devastating long-term consequences for small business owners, new entrants, and the future of the industry as a whole. A Limited Entry system would only serve to benefit larger operators and lodges while making it nearly impossible for young families or new entrepreneurs to enter the industry. We are already living with the severe limitations imposed by the Charter Halibut Permit program, which has proven to be a nightmare for independent operators. This system not only restricts new business opportunities but also creates significant challenges for aging operators looking to retire, as the resale market for these permits is severely constrained. Furthermore, our industry is already declining in the number of operators and has been for some time. The challenges of operating a charter business—rising costs, regulations, and existing permit restrictions—have led to fewer and fewer businesses in the industry. Implementing yet another barrier to entry will only accelerate this decline, ultimately harming not only charter operators but also the local economies that rely on a thriving tourism and fishing industry. The charter industry thrives on free enterprise, not government-imposed limitations that stifle competition and innovation. The best way to ensure a healthy and sustainable industry is to allow the market to dictate necessary adjustments, rather than implementing artificial barriers that benefit only a select few. I urge you to reject HCR1 and any efforts to impose further restrictions on this industry. Instead, let's focus on policies that promote opportunity, economic growth, and fairness for all operators, regardless of their size or longevity in the business. Thank you for your time and consideration. I appreciate your commitment to policies that support hardworking Alaskans and the future of our charter industry.

Additionally, it seems inappropriate and highly concerning that this resolution allows for a full one-quarter of the task force to be made up of SEAGO-appointed or recommended individuals. This would not be representative of the entire Southeast Alaska charter industry and instead demonstrates that this entire recommendation is self-serving. A task force designed to shape the future of an entire industry should not be disproportionately influenced by a single organization with its own interests.

Thank you, Grant

Captain Grantley Moore

Owner, Juneau Charters LLC

Juneau, Alaska 99801



| www.juneaucharters.com

From: David Dentinger [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, March 10, 2025 2:07 PM
To: Rep. Rebecca Himschoot <Rep.Rebecca.Himschoot@akleg.gov>
Subject: Opposed on HCR1

Dear Representative Rebecca Himschoot,

My name is David Dentinger, I'm a charter captain in Ketchikan, I'm writing today on behalf of no one but myself. I've been a charter captain for 6 seasons in Ketchikan, and I've hired and trained dozens of captains on how to run boats in the waters of the Inside Passage. I'm writing to express my opposition to HCR1.

When I look at HCR1, I don't see a proposal to sustain fisheries or to promote economic growth within our state. I see established business owners slamming and locking the door behind them to ensure healthy competition can't threaten their business models. To me, this proposal is nothing less than protectionism, building a legal framework for nepotism rather than hard work and innovation. NMFS and the Alaska Board of Fish are watching the fisheries and taking action to protect stocks. This proposal goes around those safeguards to create an additional

These fish belong to all of us. My fear with limited entry is that we would establish a permit system and grandfather in the current operators, creating a new asset class that gives ownership of the sport fishery to a privileged few who just happened to be operating in the late 2020s. This same thing happened when halibut permits were issued, and this proposal advances the cause of regulatory capture by established businesses in the state.

When closures come, we adapt, emphasizing to our guests that the value of a day on the water in Alaska is not defined by the weight of animals slaughtered during the experience. We serve guests their fresh catch as a culinary experience, we look for whales, we target pink salmon! The future of this industry is not shipping home hundreds of pounds of fish, but in celebrating biodiversity and targeting abundant species.

I came to the state in 2018, my wife and I started charter fishing together in 2019. We bought our first home with the income from charter fishing, and we're about to have our first child next week. Newcomers to this industry *are not* all seasonals, my captain friends and I are here year-round. They come here because they love this place, and many of them choose to make Alaska home. These are good jobs, they pay enough to thrive in some of our most remote communities, and they provide tax revenue. This proposal is a first step toward preventing growth in that industry.

I humbly ask, what kind of state do we want to live in? One that welcomes people into our rural communities to work and to start businesses, or a coastline of vanishing towns locked down by unassailable dynasties.

-David Dentinger

From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: HCR1
Date: Tuesday, March 11, 2025 12:57:18 PM

From: Jon Martin <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2025 9:21 AM
To: Rep. Rebecca Himschoot <Rep.Rebecca.Himschoot@akleg.gov>
Subject: HCR1

Dear legislature,

I am in strong support of HCR1 as written. As a lifelong Alaskan, charter fishing business owner, and fishing guide, we need to establish guidelines to regulate our industry or face drastic economic consequences. When charter halibut permits were mandated in the early 2000's it was an effective mechanism to limit the growth of the charter fleet. Now, we are facing restrictive king salmon management and unregulated growth of a charter industry that is impacting guides/businesses who have invested considerably. Our business has invested millions of dollars to provide multi day fishing experiences and that is now threaten by one day charter operators catering to the cruise ship industry and their clients. Multi day clients contribute significantly to local economies by spending money on food, travel, gear, lodging, fish processors, etc. The economic impact of multi day clients helps to employ countless workers in our community and helps to support Alaskan families. The unregulated growth of pop-up charters is killing our business. Annual king salmon limits don't impact the one day charter industry, they can catch kings all season long while multi day charter operators become restricted on bag limits due to the unregulated growth. There is little capital investment in one day charter businesses, most don't target halibut so they do not have to purchase or lease a charter halibut permit (CHP). Most use inexpensive boats because they don't have to travel to the outside waters of Sitka to fish for halibut. Bottom line, anyone with a small Hewes craft boat, Downriggers, and a couple rods can participate while severely impacting folks who have significant resources invested. In our opinion, guided sport fishing needs to be limited entry with permits issued to those who have been in the business (log book records) for a minimum of five years. Issue permits to cap this industry or we face demise. For those who wish to get into the business will be forced to make capital investments like we all did to fish for halibut. Make permits transferable. The model for this already exists as the federal managers did this with charter halibut. Don't wait 1, 2, or 3 years to implement change or it will be too late. I beg you for the sake of my business and others like us who have invested tremendously to make guided sport fishing limited entry. This should also included self guided boats. The rapid expansion of the self guided industry has also contributed to the issues surrounding fishery management we are experiencing. Please, help us by providing the tools of limited entry!

Sincerely, Jon Martin

Dear Members of the Alaska State Legislature,

The Elfin Cove Fish and Game Advisory Committee is writing to express our support for House Concurrent Resolution No. 1 (HCR 1), which would establish the Joint Legislative Task Force on Sport Fishing Service Providers in Southeast Alaska. This resolution is critical to ensuring that Alaskan residents and businesses remain at the forefront of discussions about the future of our fisheries while promoting responsible management of this industry.

The sport fishing service industry has a significant impact on Southeast Alaska's economy, supporting local jobs, businesses, and tourism. However, continued industry growth and the increasing presence of bare-boat rentals have added new pressures on fishery resources and heightened competition among user groups. Unlike guided sport fishing operations, these rentals often operate outside existing regulatory frameworks, making it important to establish a clear and fair approach to managing participation in the industry.

By bringing together key Alaskan stakeholders, including representatives from the sport fishing industry, commercial fishing sector, and tribal organizations, this task force will ensure that those most affected by regulatory decisions have a seat at the table. Including individuals with experience in policy and resource management will help develop well-informed, practical recommendations that balance economic sustainability, conservation, and fair access to fishery resources.

Alaska's fishery resources are among our state's most valuable assets, and we commend the legislature's commitment to proactively addressing challenges before they become crises. Establishing this task force is a necessary and responsible step to protect the long-term viability of Alaskan businesses, uphold conservation goals, and ensure that future generations can continue to benefit from our world-class fisheries.

We respectfully urge you and your colleagues to support HCR 1 and move this important resolution forward. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Elfin Cove Fish and Game Advisory Committee

Kingfisher Charters & Lodge, LLC

[REDACTED]

Craig, AK 99921

Alaskakingfisherlodge.com

RE: HBR1

3/11/2025

Dear Representative Himshoot,

I have been in the sport Lodge business since 1989 when I first got my 6-Pac license. I built our lodge with my wife and 5 daughters by 1994. (our 5 children and their families are all still running our business with our 9 grandchildren). All our business came by word of mouth back in those days without present day internet, so it was tough getting our business going taking 25 years to get to where we are now. In 1994 most people didn't know where Craig Alaska was but now it is a destination as it has gained popularity due to its remote location and great fishing.

Now I have seen extreme growth with new folks wanting to get into the game with little effort but buying a boat and getting a web site. Bookings come easy as non-resident anglers want to come fishing in Alaska. We are getting over run with charter boats and now with Klawock Native Corp bringing in cruise ships we will only see more growth and pressure on limited resource that will only become more limited as pressure mounts.

The sport fishing industry is crucial in most small communities especially Craig/Klawock area where there isn't much to offer for employment and our industry supports what few local businesses we have. Without us they probably will not be able to survive.

We need stabilization in the industry and HBR1 will help stabilize the industry before it is too late.

Please support HBR1.

Thank you,

Charles and Jeanette Haydu (owners)



Hunter McIntosh, President
The Boat Company

The Honorable Representative Louise Stutes
The Honorable Representative Rebecca Himschook
House Fisheries Committee
Alaska State Capitol
House of Representatives
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

March 11, 2025
Submitted via email to:

Re: House Concurrent Resolution No. 1: A Resolution Establishing the Joint Legislative Task Force on Sport Fishing Service Providers in 1 Southeast Alaska.

House Fisheries Committee:

I submit the following letter in support of establishing a task force for sport fishing service providers in Southeast Alaska on behalf of The Boat Company. The Boat Company is a small cruise vessel eco-tour company that has been operating in Southeast Alaska for over forty years, providing visitors with scenic views of Southeast Alaska coastlines, fjords and forests, hiking, beach combing, wildlife viewing, guided sport fishing, and other unique Southeast Alaska experiences since 1980. The Boat Company's two vessels rotate out of Sitka and Juneau each weekend during the summer, each bringing twenty to twenty-four visitors who enjoy local harbors, fishing fleets, retailers and restaurants. We conduct five day trips in Southeast Alaska's Inside Passage waterways on two vessels, the 20 passenger M/V Liseron and the 24 passenger M/V Mist Cove.

Our tours are somewhat unique because we combine multi-day eco-tour activities with guided sportfishing in skiffs deployed from the larger vessels. Guests have varied interests but in general, sport-fishing activities occur for three or four days per trip. Fishing activities and target species are diverse: saltwater and freshwater fishing for several salmon species, freshwater fishing for trout, and bottom fishing for ling cod, rockfish, and halibut. The Boat Company markets the fishing experience in general for both experienced and novice anglers.

Southeast Alaska fishing opportunities are highly important for residents and visitors and regional economic drivers. For many guests, the opportunity to catch Southeast Alaska salmon is a highlight of their Alaska experience. Also, increasing numbers of our guests are pescatarian. We proudly serve Southeast Alaska salmon delivered to our vessels that are harvested by local commercial fishermen in Sitka. In recent years, there have been multiple factors that have reduced the availability of fishery resources for all Southeast Alaska

fishermen – whether commercial, sport or for food security. Our operation now faces day of the week closures for guided halibut fishing, much shorter Chinook retention seasons and lower limits for other species. Southeast Alaska commercial and traditional fisheries are facing similar challenges. As pointed out in the Resolution, problems related to the concentration of sport fishing service providers is likely to emerge first in Southeast Alaska. From The Boat Company’s perspective, these problems are present – unmanaged growth in some sport sectors, including unguided boat rentals, has increased overall pressure and is destabilizing existing personal use sport, guided sport and commercial fisheries.

On behalf of The Boat Company, I thank the House Fisheries Committee for developing and considering a task force aimed at improving conditions for all regional fisheries. The Boat Company is a non-profit, conservation foundation that has worked for forty-five years to promote the conservation of halibut, salmon and other marine species and their habitat. I would be willing to serve on the task force as a public member in a conservation capacity should that opportunity arise.

Thank you,

Hunter McIntosh
President, The Boat Company



ALASKA CHARTER ASSOCIATION

Homer, Alaska 99603

www.alaskacharter.org

March 11, 2025

Representative Rebecca Himschoot
Alaska State Legislature

Re: HCR 001

Representative Himschoot,

Thank you for your focus on issues affecting guided sportfishing and your concern for its long-term well-being. I'm writing on behalf of the Alaska Charter Association in support of HCR1.

As a guide in the Southeast Alaska charter industry since 1985, I'm fortunate enough to remember a time when fish stocks throughout the state were abundant, bag limits were considerably more liberal, and tourism was on the rise. Over the years, I've witnessed and experienced a gradual, but steady, decline in fish stocks and bag limits, and the maturing of tourism in Alaska. The current situation finds us with diminished resources, increased competition among the various sectors of the fishing community for them, and a tourism industry that is a major segment of the Southeast Alaska economy, with all the benefits and disadvantages that entails.

The guided sportfishing industry is a significant part of Southeast Alaska tourism. It accounted for over \$200 million in revenue and generated more than \$11 million in fees and taxes to local and state governments in 2024, according to a study commissioned by the Southeast Alaska Guides Organization. The charter industry is essential to the well-being of its participants and the local communities that benefit from it.

Forming a task force to consider entry controls to regulate the guided sportfishing industry is a step toward safeguarding the charter industry's future. May I suggest that, after examining the issue, the task force:

- determine if entry controls are warranted
- if so, recommend what controls are necessary to ensure the continued viability of the industry
- develop ways to regulate the number or participants, while allowing the next generation of small, independent operators (who make up the core of the industry) the opportunity to get started without exceedingly difficult barriers to entry

The state should act on this matter before it encounters the level of turmoil currently seen in Alaska's commercial seafood industry. Ensuring the long-term viability of the charter industry is an investment in Alaska's future, maximizing the return on its valuable, but limited, marine resources.

Respectfully submitted,

Wayne T. Nasu
Executive Director, Alaska Charter Association