

STATE OF ALASKA  
THE LEGISLATURE

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HCS CSSCR 28(FIN)

Legislative  
Resolve No.  
53



Establishing the Joint Legislative Salmon Industry Task Force.

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

**WHEREAS** the salmon industry is one of the cornerstones of the Alaska economy, supporting tens of thousands of jobs, and salmon is one of our most valuable foreign export commodities; and

**WHEREAS** the global salmon market has changed considerably in recent years, placing the Alaska salmon industry in economic peril and threatening not only the main engine of the rural economy of the state but also a significant contributor to urban economies; and

**WHEREAS** imports of farmed salmon from nations with a significantly cheaper labor market are causing harmful revenue losses to the state's general fund and to municipal budgets; and

**WHEREAS** current inventories of canned Alaska salmon are expected to remain full well beyond the upcoming salmon season, and a large portion of the fleet-wide production is processed into cans; and

**WHEREAS** hundreds of harvesters are in danger of actually being without markets and being forced into bankruptcy this year; and

**WHEREAS** numerous salmon processing facilities have recently ceased operations or plan to do so before the 2002 salmon fishing season due to market factors and difficulty in obtaining operating loans; and

**WHEREAS** Alaska wild salmon is a renewable resource that is becoming increasingly unique in the global market and can provide immeasurable economic benefit to this state into perpetuity;

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature establishes the Joint Legislative Salmon Industry Task Force to address those elements of the crisis in the Alaska salmon industry that can be solved through governmental policy; and be it

**FURTHER RESOLVED** that the task force shall also address those elements of the crisis in the Alaska salmon industry that can be solved through action on the part of the industry; and be it

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

**FURTHER RESOLVED** that the duties of the task force include

(1) recommending specific means by which state government can assist one of the state's most important industries to adapt to changing economics in the most efficient and effective way possible;

(2) recommending public policy options that account for effects on the dozens of communities that are severely affected by the crisis in the Alaska salmon industry;

(3) finding areas of potential improvement to the seafood transportation infrastructure in the state;

(4) recommending improvements for the coordination of the harvesting, processing, and marketing of wild Alaska salmon;

(5) encouraging the development of new product forms for salmon;

(6) investigating the feasibility of regional and statewide cooperatives for fishing, marketing, and transportation for Alaska wild salmon and salmon products;

(7) recommending improvements to the marketing efforts of the Alaska salmon industry and ensuring the distinction of Alaska salmon products from farmed salmon;

(8) researching methods to improve the quality of Alaska salmon products;  
(9) encouraging Alaska salmon hatcheries to tailor their programs to market dynamics and to provide the maximum possible percentage of their production to common property fisheries;

(10) contracting and cooperating with appropriate private and public agencies in order to provide sound economic, social, and environmental data to the decision-making process;

(11) contracting for research, consultants, and staff, as the task force considers necessary;

(12) recommending ways to ensure that the benefit provided to the state as a result of research efforts is commensurate with the funding for that research;

(13) reviewing findings of previous salmon summits and incorporating useful information in its report; and

(14) exploring the potential of regional solutions and not just statewide results; and be it

**FURTHER RESOLVED** that the members of the task force are to conduct their business with a statewide vision of the crisis in the Alaska salmon industry and the need to find solutions to the crisis; and be it

**FURTHER RESOLVED** that the task force shall be composed of 11 members, as follows:

(1) four members of the legislature, of which at least one member must be a member of the minority of the senate or the house of representatives, appointed as follows:

(A) two members from the senate appointed jointly by the president of the senate and speaker of the house of representatives;

(B) two members from the house of representatives appointed jointly by the president of the senate and speaker of the house of representatives; and

(2) seven public members who are involved in the commercial salmon industry appointed jointly by the president of the senate, the speaker of the house of representatives, the two members of the senate appointed under (1)(A) of this clause, and the two members of the house of representatives appointed under (1)(B) of this clause; and be it

**FURTHER RESOLVED** that the members of the task force shall be appointed to

represent the statewide salmon industry as a whole and not just a particular region or harvesting sector of the industry; and be it

**FURTHER RESOLVED** that the president of the senate and the speaker of the house of representatives shall jointly appoint the chair and vice-chair of the task force; and be it

**FURTHER RESOLVED** that the task force members are entitled to per diem and travel expenses; and be it

**FURTHER RESOLVED** that the task force shall schedule meetings to account for commercial fishing seasons and openings so that no member of the task force must forego economic opportunity in order to participate in the task force; and be it

**FURTHER RESOLVED** that the task force shall submit a report of its findings and proposed industry and legislative changes to the legislature by January 31, 2003, and may make any interim reports it considers advisable; and be it

**FURTHER RESOLVED** that the task force is terminated at 11:59 p.m. on March 1, 2003.

**COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Ted Stevens and the Honorable Frank Murkowski, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young, U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.