

**STATE OF ALASKA
THE LEGISLATURE**

2002

Source

SCS CSHJR 46(RLS)

**Legislative
Resolve No.**

62



Relating to the moratorium on fish farming in British Columbia.

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

WHEREAS fishing is not just a business in Alaska; it is a way of life; and

WHEREAS, when Alaskans fought for statehood, control of our fisheries was a major issue; and

WHEREAS the Government of British Columbia, whose economic decisions affect the Alaska economy and environment both directly and indirectly, announced on January 31, 2002, that the provincial moratorium on fish farming would be lifted; and

WHEREAS seafood is Alaska's number one export; and

WHEREAS the commercial fishing industry in Alaska is the state's largest private sector employer; and

WHEREAS Alaska produces 90 - 95 percent of the commercial harvest of wild salmon in the United States; and

WHEREAS, in 2001, there were 29,000 accidental releases of farmed salmon from British Columbia salmon farms; and

WHEREAS escaped farmed Atlantic salmon have been caught in Alaska commercial fisheries as far west as the Bering Sea; and

WHEREAS escaped farmed salmon are competing with native Alaska wild salmon for food; and

WHEREAS disease transfers have been documented from farmed salmon to native wild salmon; and

WHEREAS escaped Atlantic salmon from salmon farms in British Columbia are now found in approximately 80 streams, and most of these salmon are mature and capable of spawning; and

WHEREAS the Pacific Salmon Treaty with Canada has provisions for the protection of habitat and the safe passage of fish; and

WHEREAS escaped Atlantic Salmon are a threat to Alaska's marine environment and the ecology of Pacific salmon; and

WHEREAS Canada is now entering into finfish farming of halibut and sablefish; and

WHEREAS the long-term health of Alaska's wild salmon stocks, as well as halibut and sablefish, is of vital economic and cultural importance and is a major policy priority of the State of Alaska;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully urges the government of British Columbia to reinstate the moratorium on fish farming until Alaskans can be assured that all possible steps have been taken to preclude further escapes of farmed fish from British Columbia waters; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature requests the United States Department of State, while negotiating trade agreements with Canada and in the arena of the Pacific Salmon Commission negotiations on the Pacific Salmon Treaty, to consider the numerous negative effects that farmed salmon from British Columbia have on the economy, environment, and fishing industry of Alaska.

COPIES of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Gordon Campbell, Premier, Government of British Columbia, Canada; the Honorable John van Dongen, Minister of Agriculture, Food, and Fisheries, Government of British Columbia, Canada; the Honorable Colin Powell, United States Secretary of State; the Honorable Don Evans, United States Secretary of Commerce; the Honorable Ann Veneman, United States Secretary of

Agriculture; and 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; and to the members of the Pacific Salmon Commission.