

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 46

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY THE HOUSE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON FISHERIES

Introduced: 2/19/02

Referred: House Special Committee on Fisheries, Resources

A RESOLUTION

1 **Relating to the moratorium on fish farming in British Colombia.**

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

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

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

6 **WHEREAS** the Government of British Columbia, whose economic decisions affect
7 the Alaska economy and environment both directly and indirectly, announced on January 31,
8 2002 that the provincial moratorium on fish farming would be lifted; and

9 **WHEREAS** seafood is Alaska's number one export; and

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

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

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

16 **WHEREAS** farmed Atlantic salmon are the largest catch by British Columbia

1 fishermen and escaped farmed Atlantic salmon have been caught in Alaska commercial
2 fisheries; and

3 **WHEREAS** the inherent threat of interbreeding of Atlantic salmon and Alaska wild
4 salmon seriously threatens populations of the native Alaska wild salmon; and

5 **WHEREAS** farmed salmon are competing with native Alaska wild salmon for food;
6 and

7 **WHEREAS** disease transfers have been documented from farmed salmon to native
8 Alaska wild salmon; and

9 **WHEREAS** escaped Atlantic salmon from salmon farms in British Columbia are now
10 spawning in approximately 80 streams; and

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

13 **WHEREAS** salmon farms are a threat to Alaska's marine environment and the
14 ecology of Pacific salmon;

15 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully urges the United
16 States Department of State, while negotiating trade agreements with Canada and in the arena
17 of the Pacific Salmon Commission negotiations on the Pacific Salmon Treaty, to consider the
18 numerous negative effects that farmed salmon from British Columbia have on the economy,
19 environment, and fishing industry of Alaska; and be it

20 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully requests the
21 Governor of British Columbia to initiate an effort to remove Atlantic salmon originating in
22 British Columbia from Alaska streams or to reimburse the State of Alaska for that effort; and
23 be it

24 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature strongly supports the
25 reinstatement of the British Columbia moratorium on fish farming in waters adjacent to
26 Alaska.

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

1 Canada; and to the Honorable Ted Stevens and the Honorable Frank Murkowski, U.S.
2 Senators, and the Honorable Don Young, U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska
3 delegation in Congress; and to the members of the Pacific Salmon Commission.