

**HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 15**

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTY-FOURTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

**BY THE HOUSE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON FISHERIES**

**Introduced: 3/1/05**

**Referred: House Special Committee on Fisheries, Resources**

**A RESOLUTION**

1 **Relating to open ocean aquaculture in the federal exclusive economic zone.**

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

3 **WHEREAS** Alaska wild fish stocks are healthy and sustainable, in large part due to a  
4 strong gene pool and Alaska's history of sound fisheries management, clean water, and habitat  
5 protection; and

6 **WHEREAS** Alaska commercial, subsistence, and recreational fisheries are managed  
7 to achieve the state's constitutional mandate of sustained yield; and

8 **WHEREAS** the State of Alaska enacted legislation in 1990 to prohibit finfish farming  
9 in state waters; and

10 **WHEREAS** there are numerous outstanding issues and concerns regarding the social,  
11 economic, health, and environmental consequences of farmed fish, both in state and federal  
12 waters; and

13 **WHEREAS** open net cage fish farming poses persistent risks to the health of the  
14 marine resources of Alaska; and

15 **WHEREAS** salmon farming has had severe economic impacts on coastal  
16 communities in Alaska as demonstrated by significantly lower prices for wild salmon

1 fisheries products; and

2 **WHEREAS** Alaska coastal communities and fishing families rely on the health of  
3 wild fish stocks for a strong economy; and

4 **WHEREAS** global markets increasingly demand natural seafood products harvested  
5 sustainably from a clean environment; and

6 **WHEREAS** the seafood industry in Alaska has developed strong name recognition in  
7 the marketplace for wild, natural, and healthy seafood products; and

8 **WHEREAS** successful seafood marketing depends on product differentiation and  
9 Alaska's untarnished name is its greatest asset in the global market; and

10 **WHEREAS** the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration is promoting  
11 legislation to permit open ocean aquaculture in federal waters from three to 200 miles  
12 offshore of the states; and

13 **WHEREAS** the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act  
14 provides for input from fishermen and coastal communities through regional fishery  
15 management councils; and

16 **WHEREAS** the proponents of federal open ocean aquaculture and members of the  
17 ocean aquaculture industry have not satisfactorily demonstrated that this activity will not be  
18 detrimental to the ocean resources and to the economy of Alaska coastal communities; and

19 **WHEREAS** Governor Frank H. Murkowski has proposed a five-year moratorium on  
20 all permitting, leasing, or development of ocean pen-reared shellfish and finfish in the federal  
21 exclusive economic zone off Alaska;

22 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature is committed to ensuring that  
23 open ocean aquaculture does no harm to ecosystem integrity, to existing wild fisheries, or to  
24 the social and economic well-being of Alaska coastal communities; and be it

25 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature supports the regional  
26 fishery management councils under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and  
27 Management Act and their involvement in any discussions or proposals regarding open ocean  
28 aquaculture proposals in federal waters; and be it

29 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully requests the  
30 United States Congress to require any federal proposal to authorize open ocean aquaculture in  
31 the federal exclusive economic zone to undergo a legislative environmental impact statement,

1 as required by law.

2 **COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable George W. Bush, President  
3 of the United States; the Honorable Ted Stevens, President Pro Tempore of the U.S. Senate  
4 and member of the Alaska delegation in Congress; the Honorable J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker  
5 of the U.S. House of Representatives; the Honorable Carlos Gutierrez, United States Secretary  
6 of Commerce; and the Honorable Lisa Murkowski, U.S. Senator, and the Honorable Don  
7 Young, U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.