

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE  
HOUSE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON FISHERIES**

February 17, 2015

10:00 a.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Representative Louise Stutes, Chair  
Representative Dan Ortiz

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Representative Neal Foster  
Representative Bob Herron  
Representative Craig Johnson  
Representative Charisse Millett  
Representative Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins

**COMMITTEE CALENDAR**

PRESENTATION(S): ALASKA MARITIME WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

- HEARD

**PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION**

No previous action to record

**WITNESS REGISTER**

KRISTINE NOROSZ, Director  
Government Affairs  
Icicle Seafoods  
Petersburg, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Co-presented the Alaska Maritime Workforce Development Plan.

JULIE DECKER, Executive Director  
Alaska Fisheries Development Foundation, Inc. (AFDF)  
Anchorage, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Co-presented the Alaska Maritime Workforce Development Plan.

MATT ALWARD, Vice President  
Homer Marine Trades Association  
Homer, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Co-presented the Alaska Maritime Workforce Development Plan.

DOUG WARD, Director  
Ship Yard Development  
Vigor Industrial LLC  
Ketchikan, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Co-presented the Alaska Maritime Workforce Development Plan.

**ACTION NARRATIVE**

[10:00:43 AM](#)

**CHAIR LOUISE STUTES** called the House Special Committee on Fisheries meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. Representatives Stutes and Ortiz were present at the call to order.

**PRESENTATION(S):**  
**Alaska Maritime Workforce Development Plan**

[10:01:37 AM](#)

CHAIR STUTES announced that the only order of business is a presentation of the Alaska Maritime Workforce Development Plan.

[10:02:13 AM](#)

KRISTINE NOROSZ, Director, Government Affairs, Icicle Seafoods, began a PowerPoint presentation entitled, "Sustaining Alaska's Communities and Economy through Maritime Workforce Development." She said Alaska is as a maritime state and the maritime industry includes both onshore and offshore activities (slide 2). People are employed in seafood harvesting and processing; sport charter businesses; fisheries research, management, and enhancement; marine transportation; marine support industries serving ship and boat design, construction, and repair; and stevedoring and longshoring. Maritime is a complex and global industry engaging both large and small businesses and agencies that can be unaware of each other's value to their enterprise. The seafood sector alone contributes over \$6 billion a year in total impact to the state of Alaska, so it can be concluded that the contribution of the entire maritime industry is much higher. Alaska's economy is also highly reliant on marine transportation and services. Almost all of Alaska's food and household goods comes north by container ship, while the state's major exports of crude oil and seafood products travel south on these same ships. Jobs in the

seafood, marine transportation, and other maritime sectors form the economic backbone of many Alaska communities. The state's marine highway system operates ferries that are integral to the livelihood of all of Alaska's coastal communities, moving both people and goods all over the state. Both Native and non-Native Alaskans depend strongly on the marine environment for food and recreation, and subsistence harvest is a unique part of Alaska's economy and culture. Occupations in the maritime industry range from the professional in the office to the skilled trade jobs found on the ground and on the water. These jobs can be found in every community along Alaska's rivers and coastline, including Anchorage. These businesses range from large employers such as the Alaska Department of Fish & Game (ADF&G) and seafood processors to thousands of small proprietorships, including fishermen, marine fabricators, and other marine support operations.

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MS. NOROSZ noted that until now these occupations have not been characterized as a unique and related workforce (slide 3). Collectively, the maritime industry is the largest private employer in Alaska with over 68,000 workers with over 500 firms. Examples of the maritime workforce by sub-sector include commercial fishing, sportfish guiding, water transportation, boat building and repair, marine engineering, and numerous jobs with different state and federal agencies. She recalled that during his State of the State address, Governor Walker talked about putting Alaskans to work in career occupations as a high priority of his administration. Resident hire in some sectors of the maritime economy is high, reflecting localized demographics while other sectors and areas struggle to find adequate numbers of Alaskans wanting to, or qualified to, perform the work required. The goal of the Alaska Maritime Workforce Development Plan is to connect businesses operating in Alaska with resident Alaskans who are skilled, knowledgeable, and desire careers in rewarding and challenging occupations.

MS. NOROSZ noted that marine career opportunities currently abound in Alaska. The Arctic is a maritime environment that is commanding more focus daily. A recently released report by the McDowell Group, "Ties that Bind," describes the value of all the goods and services exported from Puget Sound coming to Alaska. These Alaska imports represent the opportunity to diversify and strengthen the state's economy through value-added activities currently performed in the Lower 48. To identify high-value careers available to Alaska residents, a private/public

partnership was formed to create the Alaska Maritime Workforce Development Plan (slide 4). This 18-month effort that engaged hundreds of Alaskans in defining the needs and priorities to develop a globally collective maritime workforce.

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MS. NOROSZ stated that the goals of this plan (slide 5) are to: develop a responsive workforce that keeps the maritime industry and economy strong; guide Alaska's workforce to discover and prepare for these jobs; and increase the number of Alaskans in skilled maritime occupations. The plan was created with guidance from industry, the University of Alaska, and many others (slides 6-7). The task at hand now is to identify and develop the best workforce development and investment practices to create a resilient workforce capable of competing in a global economy. The members of the Alaska Maritime Workforce Development Industry Advisory Committee are committing time and resource to accomplish this task. Elected officials, five state agencies, the University of Alaska, and the Rasmussen Foundation have also provided support for this plan. The university has allocated legislatively directed funds to this effort and many hours of staff time. With support from industry countless hours have been dedicated to creation of this plan. An even greater effort is going to be required to implement it and with fewer resources available. As public resources decline, today's tumultuous economy is driving advances in technology and production, requiring an adaptive and informed workforce and workforce investment system for Alaska to be competitive.

MS. NOROSZ pointed out that the challenge to defining and preparing Alaska's maritime workforce is represented by the complexity implied by the chart on slide 8. The chart illustrates that it's not a linear progression as a person goes on a career path in the maritime industry, but rather a web of cross-cutting skills that allow a person to go in many different directions. The skills, knowledge, and abilities required to successfully perform in the maritime work world can be transferred across a spectrum of Alaska resource-based and energy-based industries. An enduring workforce investment system must cut across economic, geographic, jurisdictional, seasonal, and cultural boundaries to respond to Alaska's diverse and demanding workplace.

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JULIE DECKER, Executive Director, Alaska Fisheries Development Foundation, Inc. (AFDF), reported that surveys of the maritime sub-sectors were conducted during development of the workforce plan to identify the high demand/high priority occupations. High demand/priority is where there is a need today to fill workers in positions. The priority occupations identified in the seafood harvesting sub-sector (slide 9) include [commercial] seafood harvesters (both permit holders and crewmembers), vessel repair and maintenance service providers, and shellfish farmers. She added that many fisherman are workers in vessel repair and maintenance during the off-season. She also noted that while there is not a high need for shellfish farmers today, there is potential for high growth in the future. Nine priority occupations were identified in the seafood processing sub-sector (slide 10), many of which have overlaps with other industries. Priority occupations were also identified in the research, enhancement, and management sub-sector (slide 11), a sub-sector that is vitally important to the seafood industry. To have fisheries, there must be managers and research, and enhancement has also become a huge component of that. Many of the aforementioned priority occupations are highly trained, higher paid, year round, positions in Alaska's communities. Other priority occupations were identified in the marine occupations and support industries sub-sector, which includes the occupations of ship building; vessel operations - deckhands, vessel engineers, and captains; and vessel repair and maintenance service providers.

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MS. DECKER discussed the five overall strategies for how to get to the final goal of employing more Alaskans in the maritime industry and in these high priority occupations (slide 13). Many of these overall strategies are also employed in the other industries that have workforce development plans, such as oil and gas, health care, and mining. One overall strategy is to grow awareness of maritime occupations and develop career pathways (slide 14). This includes working within the state's school system and in areas where there are folks who have the skills and may be interested, such as veterans. Two other overall strategies are to improve workforce readiness (slide 15) and to train Alaskans for maritime careers through the education system and technical training organizations (slide 16). Another overall strategy is supporting recruitment and retention (slide 17), which is common to the other workforce development plans that already exist. Lastly, an important overall strategy is promoting sustained industry engagement (slide 18). Workforce

activities are most effective when the industry is sitting at the table and saying how education programs can be aligned with industry's needs. How to promote sustained industry engagement has been a theme for the Industry Advisory Committee and the committee is continuing to talk about a structure for how to move that forward long term. The University of Alaska has provided support to the committee's efforts and industry is now looking forward within its own structures.

10:18:02 AM

MS. DECKER addressed implementing the Alaska Maritime Workforce Development Plan (slide 19). She said the Alaska Fisheries Development Foundation is exploring the idea of helping to create this new structure for the statewide industry input as the plan rolls out and is implemented. She noted she lives in Wrangell and is on the Wrangell Assembly. Wrangell has a marine service center with two boat haul-outs and over the last 5-10 years the state has generously helped in the building of a good infrastructure there. To help build that out, Wrangell is now working with the Economic Develop Committee and staff, the high school shop teacher, and the marine service center businesses to identify what the businesses need for workforce development and to help make those happen in conjunction with the high school shop teacher. Some excellent things are coming out of that simple collaboration on a local level. For example, the high school shop teacher was able to purchase and get running some high-tech equipment: computers are being used to cut pieces for the shipyard that the businesses in the community are purchasing from the high school shop class. Efforts are being made to link these small local efforts to regional efforts and then look statewide for how to work together.

MS. NOROSZ added that since the plan has come out, some training opportunities have been increased in quality control and ammonia refrigeration, and doing that with vessel repair is also being looked at. The Industry Advisory Committee continues to meet and work groups are working on some of the priority occupations. The University of Alaska has put in a Tier 1 grant application to the Rasmussen Foundation to create some videos for use in high schools about career awareness.

10:21:06 AM

MS. NOROSZ, responding to Representative Ortiz, stated that 68,000 jobs are attributed to the maritime sector.

REPRESENTATIVE ORTIZ remarked that that is a significant part of the economy and workforce. Regarding development of the workforce and the programs to do that, he asked whether Ms. Norosz thinks that this effort is being felt coastally across the state or is limited to specific communities.

MS. NOROSZ replied there are some real specific examples that are going on in different communities. A lot of things are also going on in terms of regional training centers and University of Alaska campuses and some of the high schools. Part of it is just becoming aware of what others are doing and trying to get everybody collaborating and working in alignment so everyone is pulling in the same direction and so nothing is duplicative or inefficient within the system. If everyone is in alignment with the plan, it can then be figured out what the best practices are and use those systems in other parts of the state and reach the plan goals faster. With declining revenues, it is realized that no monies will be received to implement this, so everyone must work smarter and one way to do that is for everybody to get behind the plan.

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REPRESENTATIVE ORTIZ noted he comes from the field of education in public high schools. Regarding Ms. Decker's statement about simple collaboration at the local level, he said he knows that sometimes it is not so simple to get connected and integrated into the public school system. He inquired whether there has been an openness in this regard in the different communities and school districts around the coastal areas.

MS. NOROSZ responded that that is a hard thing to answer. This month is Career Technical Education (CTE) Month and it was found in some areas that there is a lot of emphasis on getting kids to four-year degree programs. However, there are a lot of jobs in Alaska that aren't geared to four-year college degree jobs. There is a wide variety of jobs and many take hands-on skills that cannot be done in an office or on a computer. The diversity of jobs in Alaska needs to be recognized and to cater training and education to meet that variety of needs. A lot was learned in the process of doing this plan. The University of Alaska did an inventory of all its classes that are related in any way to the maritime industries and the university was surprised at the depth and breadth of the classes that it was offering. Many of the people involved are still learning about what the regional training centers provide. For high schools it is highly variable and probably dependent on the particular

philosophy of the local school board as to what degree the board is pushing workforce development. Career awareness is a high priority for the workforce development plan. That can start in elementary school and continue throughout people's careers at any age. Sometimes a person doesn't understand how the skills he or she has might be applied to other occupations or how the skills a person wants to learn could be applied to many different occupations. It all starts with career awareness and the opportunities that abound in Alaska. The Arctic is getting more and more attention and that will continue to grow, but the plan talks about jobs that are available right now in the maritime industries and where there is a real shortage of skilled workers.

MS. DECKER added that the issue of high schools and the variety within communities is really important, along with how it is approached statewide. When working together on a statewide level, there is the potential to look at things like school policy and doing things with the school counselors and the career awareness piece rolls into that. She said she likes to use the phrase "blue collar, high dollar jobs" because this is what is really being looked at. Sometimes there is a bias that those aren't really good jobs, but they are good jobs and they are high dollar jobs.

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CHAIR STUTES inquired whether the Industry Advisory Committee has informational booths or presentations at fish expositions or trade fairs to get the word out. Speaking from Kodiak, she said many young people go to the ComFish Alaska trade show.

MS. NOROSZ advised that the plan just came out in May and agreed that that is a good suggestion. The advisory committee is getting the word out by addressing many different types of groups, such as rotaries, chambers of commerce, school board gatherings, and superintendent conferences, as well as using social media. A web site has been established that includes links with the Department of Labor & Workforce Development, Alaska Department of Fish & Game, and the university. The advisory committee is doing everything it can to get the word out and is always open to more suggestions.

CHAIR STUTES commented that she would think the advisory committee would want to go where the young people are, and a chamber of commerce meeting isn't it. She suggested, for

example, that high schools could be targeted outside of basketball games.

MS. NOROSZ replied that the reason she mentioned chambers of commerce is because it is incumbent upon the advisory committee to let employers know what is going on because not all the employers have been involved in developing this plan. If chambers of commerce are aware, they may be interested in establishing some internship or apprenticeship programs. They can learn how they can become more involved so that they can find the skilled workers they need. It is about awareness for both the potential employee and the employers.

CHAIR STUTES agreed it is community awareness.

[10:30:46 AM](#)

MATT ALWARD, Vice President, Homer Marine Trades Association, noted his association is made up of about 70 members in marine trades businesses. The association was originally formed as an advertising collective to promote Homer as a place to do boat work and bring vessels. But, as the businesses started to grow they quickly realized they had no local workforce to draw from. So, workforce development, career awareness, became one of the association's missions. The first thing the association did with its limited funds was create a scholarship of \$1,000 for high school students as well as community members wanting to go to vocational school with plans of coming back to Homer with those skills. This year is the third year of the scholarship and the hope is to expand it. The second thing the association did was career awareness by getting together with shop teachers at the Homer high school. Given the association's lack of funds, it knew it couldn't make a new program, but the association was invited to speak at the Focus on Learning class. For six Fridays in a row the association had a different trade business meet with kids to explain where they can go with skill development in a trade. So far there have been fifteen students and a positive response. The association is emphasizing things that kids relate to, such as how computer skills relate to vessel building, maintenance, and repair.

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CHAIR STUTES asked what kinds of businesses were at the classes.

MR. ALWARD responded the first class was a general overview and included a presentation by the owner of a local boat repair,

painting, and hauling business about how local young people with a commercial driver's license haul boats for him. Other presenters were people who graduated from the Homer high school and who now have their own fishing businesses; they talked about entry level local fishing opportunities. A diesel engine repairman brought in an engine and demonstrated how today's engines are computer controlled and let the kids run diagnostic tests. This showed the kids that to be a diesel mechanic they have to have computer skills. A local boat builder came in with the three-dimensional modeling, which really got the kids' attention. Presentations were also provided on electronics, net building, and lines and riggings. From these classes the association hopes to get a good sense of what the kids are interested in, and how many, and as phase two, take that information to the school board to get permission to develop more comprehensive programs that will get these kids actual skills that they could take to a workplace or carry them on to a vocational school. The association also became involved with the Kenai Peninsula College (KPC) when the college invited the association to create a class that the college would facilitate. The association began with eight classes that are two-hours long. The classes include all the different basic skills that are needed for someone wanting to get into fishing, marine transportation, or an on-the-water job. Each of the eight classes was sponsored by a different marine trade that was responsible for the curriculum and for teaching the class.

CHAIR STUTES inquired as to what skills are needed to get into the marine industry.

MR. ALWARD answered that first is getting a real idea of what working on a boat is actually like because it can be very romantic but there are many parts of it that are not. Another is understanding the legal relationships between vessel master and crew. There are also basic line and rigging skills, safety, engine skills, and hydraulic, electrical, and system skills.

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REPRESENTATIVE ORTIZ asked whether the aforementioned classes in Homer were part of a career class that was already in place and the association was granted some slots in that class, or whether it was a special class that kids voluntarily came to.

MR. ALWARD replied that the Focus on Learning class is something the high school already had and many times it is just a study hall. So, it is an open period and was something the

association could come to. In the 1980s the high school had some good programs that have since gone away, so the association is re-creating in that regard.

REPRESENTATIVE ORTIZ understood the plan is to get feedback from the students and then implement an actual class within the school schedule.

MR. ALWARD confirmed that is the goal.

REPRESENTATIVE ORTIZ asked whether significant equipment would need to be funded to get that class going.

MR. ALWARD responded it would depend on what the association comes up with. Right now the high school has a welding program that funds itself by building trailers and auctioning them off. It isn't yet at the level of Wrangell where the high school is actually working for industry, but that is a goal. Since it is known more teachers cannot be funded, the plan is to get industry involved by having industry experts come into the class and teach the skills.

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CHAIR STUTES inquired whether the association is hoping that these will be credited courses.

MR. ALWARD answered "eventually," and explained that the college classes are two-hour classes so they are not credited. The cost is \$25 a class and the classes are being promoted to the whole community, including the high school. At the high school class the association is giving out four \$25 certificates to encourage the kids to take the next step and go to the college classes. Responding further to Chair Stutes, he confirmed there are about 15 kids per class at the high school, many of whom are already in the shop class. While it is hard to judge during the class, the kids are actually paying attention and do ask a few questions and the feedback from the shop teacher is that there is a lot of buzz.

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DOUG WARD, Director, Shipyard Development, Vigor Industrial LLC, noted that Vigor Alaska operates the Ketchikan and Seward shipyards. He said he has been with the Ketchikan shipyard since 1994 when he and Randy Johnson started Alaska Ship & Drydock to bring life back to the shipyard which had been closed

for several years. He and Mr. Johnson had the unique and beneficial advantage of not knowing anything about the business before they started. As a result of that, he and Mr. Johnson did not have a lot of the biases that are built into the U.S. shipbuilding industrial base, which has been uninterrupted for 250 years. He added that he chairs the governor's Workforce Investment Board and he has been on that board for over 15 years. Workforce has been an important part of the planning for the Ketchikan shipyard and that has been built into the company's development plans. He explained that in shipbuilding there is a lot of global benchmarking and comparison of best industrial practices to develop efficiencies and build vessels faster, better, and cheaper. In 1995 he became involved with the National Shipbuilding Research Program (NSRP) which is funded by the U.S. Navy to identify competitive weaknesses in the U.S. industrial base and then have shipbuilders make recommendations and come up with solutions to those competitive disadvantages. One of the first things he became involved in with the NSRP was developing national skill standards for shipbuilding and the common question from education is, "What is it you need for us to teach?" Now the shipbuilding industry has national skill standards that are based on production processes rather than occupations. By focusing on production processes it is possible to see those skills and key tasks that cut across all of the industrial processes and when it gets to education it can be said that what is being asked to be taught cuts across industry sectors as well. The basic construction skills that go into building or repairing a ship or boat are essential to construction and to oil and gas. Roughly 70 percent of the priority occupations that Alaska as a state has targeted for oil and gas exist and reside within the Ketchikan shipyard. The shipyard is always looking for those cross-cutting capabilities with any of the initiatives that it undertakes. The shipyard also looks for benchmarking to ensure that what it is doing is providing either infrastructure or a competitive workforce.

MR. WARD noted that the 1998 Workforce Investment Act has been reauthorized. This federal law provides federal training dollars to the [U.S. Department of Labor] Employment & Training Administration to the states. The 1998 Act was focused on the individual worker and how to get disadvantaged and displaced workers. The 2014 Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, which is the authorization, recognizes that the demand side of workforce must be addressed too. A hallmark of the new Act is it requires that economic developers, the investors in infrastructure, must work together with workforce development. It pushes economic and workforce development together and

requires that they be joined at the hip, which is a sea state change for federal law and for federal investments. Much of what is being done is to line up with the new Workforce Investment Act. It talks about performance-based apprenticeship which is based on a person's ability to perform work rather than how long a person has been in a position. The significant changes made to the federal Act are in alignment with global best practices for a competitive workforce.

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MR. WARD discussed what the Ketchikan shipyard is doing that is based on these national standards. He noted that three years ago his shipyard was purchased by Vigor of Portland, Oregon and Seattle, Washington, so the shipyard is now one of the nine shipyards existing under the Vigor umbrella. While Alaska is an outlier for Vigor, [the Ketchikan shipyard] is showing that Alaska can be innovative and can lead in its competitive practices. The Ketchikan shipyard has adopted the National Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCER) curriculum for construction trades that in Alaska is managed by [Associated General Contractors of Alaska] and which has the Alaska Construction Academies. They administer all the testing and overview for NCCER curriculum on construction skills. About 15 years ago the NSRP recognized that those construction skills fundamentally are the same across all industries, so [NSRP] recommended adoption of NCCER levels 1 through 2, with the junior level industrial processes being moved over onto the private sector for that more specialized training. He said NCCER is affordable, standardized, and has very high economic credentialing authority. Most importantly, though, is the affordability - about \$40 gets a text book that can be used. There is a standard curriculum platform on which to build for entry level, middle skill, and journey level workers. The Ketchikan shipyard has the contract to build two new ferries for the State of Alaska. Between that and the Seward shipyard, Vigor needs about 150 new shipyard workers and this is the process that Vigor is following to get those new Alaskan workers into these jobs. Vigor is moving its current entry-level-skill workers into middle skills, the middle-skill workers are being moved up to journey, and journey workers are being taught leadership and supervision. That is making way for new Alaskans to come into the job. This week the construction academy is rolling out the Pre-Apprentice Program for Marine Industrial Skills; it is built into Ketchikan high school as well as an adult program. Young people are being brought into the shipyard to see what it does, to become aware of the careers there, and

to actually start learning how to do things. Vigor is looking forward to about 150 new young Alaskans joining the company in the next 6-12 months. The University of Alaska is a partner in this. The university has developed a maritime multi-skilled worker program that is 8 hours a day for 12 weeks and is a cross-cutting course in itself. Students completing the course are qualified to go to work for the Alaska Marine Highway and other shipping companies as a deck engineer, which keeps the vessels operating. The modules within that course are about industrial processes: electronics, electrical, welding, fabrication. It also prepares people for careers in shipbuilding and repair.

MR. WARD addressed the question from Representative Ortiz about how the Alaska Workforce Investment plan is dealing with distributing the career awareness as well as the tools to learn this. Because NCCER exists within the state's training institutions, he said one of his goals by adopting NCCER is to have one of [Vigor's] young workers get college credit sometime in 2015 from Ilisagvik College in Barrow since NCCER is a common curriculum. The Community Development Quota (CDQ) groups in Western Alaska have expressed interest. They rely on fishing vessels for Bristol Bay and discussions are being had about six-month internships for CDQ people to come [to the Ketchikan shipyard] and learn vessel maintenance, repair, and building for replacement of the vessels in the Bristol Bay area. So, the answer to the question is that, yes, what is being done in Ketchikan is transferable across industry sectors. The knowledge, skills, and ability to build a boat are needed to build almost anything. It is transferable across occupations and it is transferable across both geographic and jurisdictional boundaries. Workforce development and maritime are almost equally complex, so this recent growing awareness of and interest in Alaska's maritime industry is like a school of dolphins as far as how to control things and where to go with everything. It is up to industry to help guide that. He said he is going to accept the invitation from Chair Stutes to attend the ComFish Alaska trade show and ensure that Kodiak's kids know what is going on.

[10:50:44 AM](#)

CHAIR STUTES understood the Ketchikan shipyard was purchased by [Vigor Industrial LLC] two to three years ago. She asked whether the construction and the workforce will remain in Alaska or whether construction will occur in Washington and Oregon and then shipped to Alaska.

MR. WARD replied that the two new state ferries are being built in Ketchikan, which indicates Vigor Industrial's commitment to the state. To get that contract, Vigor's pricing had to equal or be better than Gulf of Mexico pricing for building new ships. For a whole host of reasons there is roughly a 25-30 percent cost disadvantage to do work in Alaska as compared to the Gulf of Mexico. Vigor has taken that contract at \$101 million, which started out to build a single boat, but now two are being built for the same price. This is an indication that Vigor is in Alaska to stay. Vigor purposely took that contract to provide four years of stability so that these kinds of workforce development programs can be demonstrated as well as proven, and then begin distributing this around the state.

[10:52:32 AM](#)

MS. NOROSZ pointed out that the [Industry Advisory Committee] understands it has a lot of things it needs to continue doing to fully implement this. Industry continues to meet regularly and continues to get the word out. [The advisory committee] is meeting with some of the new members of the administration to make them aware of this workforce plan. Anything that legislators can do to help state agencies work with the advisory committee to ensure implementation of this plan is encouraged. It is recognized that with dwindling state dollars more must be done with less. It would behoove the Alaska Department of Fish & Game and the Department of Transportation & Public Facilities because of the greying of their workforce. It is within the mission of the Department of Labor & Workforce Development; the Department of Commerce, Community & Economic Development; and the University of Alaska to work on workforce development. Anything the legislature can do to encourage them would be appreciated, whether it is a resolution or discussions about work with all the industries that have workforce development plans. She urged that the Education Tax Credit be retained because it has been an excellent tool for industry to use to further invest in workforce development and training. She thanked the committee for listening to the presentation.

[10:54:30 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE ORTIZ commented that most school districts have career classes that would be a natural place for a presentation. He asked Mr. Ward how it works in a practical sense to get young people to the shipyard, given school classroom schedules.

MR. WARD responded that the shipyard is working with the school counselors and with the career and technical education instructors. Students who may not be college bound or who don't know what they want to do are being encouraged to go to the shipyard to see what the shipyard is doing. For example, the high school teacher of a girl taking a welding class called him to say that this girl was a natural and could he bring her to the shipyard. She spent six months at the shipyard and now wants a career there. He offered his hope that one day this girl will be leading the company because she has the drive and intelligence that it takes to do that. The shipyard works hard to reach out to the teachers and schools to find students, he said, and then celebrates those success stories.

[10:58:00 AM](#)

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business before the committee, the House Special Committee on Fisheries meeting was adjourned at 10:58 a.m.