

**HOUSE BILL NO. 356**

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

THIRTY-FOURTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY REPRESENTATIVE VANCE

Introduced: 2/23/26

Referred: House Special Committee on Fisheries, Labor and Commerce

**A BILL**

**FOR AN ACT ENTITLED**

1 **"An Act relating to health and sanitary requirements and certain permits for**  
2 **commercial fishing vessels; and providing for an effective date."**

3 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

4 \* **Section 1.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section  
5 to read:

6 SHORT TITLE. This Act may be known as the Alaska Coastal Micro-Fisheries Act.

7 \* **Sec. 2.** AS 44.46.020 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

8 (c) If the Department of Environmental Conservation finds that a commercial  
9 vessel and the associated fishery processing operation operated by a commercial fisher  
10 described under AS 44.46.027(a)(1) meet safety standards, including those established  
11 under 21 C.F.R. Part 123, and that the fisher harvests only fishery species that present  
12 a low risk of spreading pests or disease from the vessel, the regulations of the  
13 Department of Conservation that relate to the production and processing of the fishery  
14 resource must

1 (1) exempt the vessel and associated fishery processing operation from  
2 additional health and sanitary requirements; and

3 (2) allow up to 5,000 pounds of harvested fishery resources to be  
4 packaged and frozen aboard the vessel for each voyage.

5 \* **Sec. 3.** AS 44.46.025 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

6 (f) Notwithstanding (a) of this section, the Department of Environmental  
7 Conservation may not charge a licensed commercial fisher who harvests fewer than  
8 10,000 pounds of fishery resources annually from a vessel under 50 feet in overall  
9 length, and who processes the fishery resource under a direct marketing fisheries  
10 business license issued under AS 43.75.020(c), more than \$100 in annual fees under  
11 AS 17.20 and this chapter.

12 \* **Sec. 4.** AS 44.46 is amended by adding a new section to read:

13 **Sec. 44.46.027. Regulations for certain commercial fishers fishing from**  
14 **small fishing vessels.** (a) The Department of Environmental Conservation shall, in  
15 consultation with the Department of Fish and Game, work to simplify and streamline  
16 regulations applicable to a licensed commercial fisher who processes fishery resources  
17 harvested by the fisher under a direct marketing fisheries business license issued under  
18 AS 43.75.020(c) and who harvests

19 (1) less than 10,000 pounds of fishery resources annually from a vessel  
20 under 50 feet in overall length; or

21 (2) fishery resources from a vessel that does not exceed 65 feet in  
22 overall length.

23 (b) The Department of Environmental Conservation shall approve or deny a  
24 permit requested by a commercial fisher described in (a)(1) or (2) of this section  
25 within 30 days after the fisher applies for the permit.

26 (c) In simplifying and streamlining regulations under this section, the  
27 Department of Environmental Conservation shall prioritize simplifying and  
28 streamlining regulations applicable to commercial fishers described in (a)(1) of this  
29 section who fish from rural coastal communities. The Department of Environmental  
30 Conservation shall ensure the regulations address the specific economic challenges  
31 posed by fishing from rural coastal communities, including high costs and difficulties

1 in accessing product markets.

2 \* **Sec. 5.** This Act takes effect July 1, 2026.