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Offered: 4/20/82  
Referred: Rules

1 IN THE SENATE BY THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

2 HOUSE CS FOR CS FOR SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 70 (Resources)

3 IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

4 TWELFTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

5 Relating to commercial fishing of  
6 North Pacific chinook salmon.

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

8 WHEREAS the Alaska commercial fishing industry provides the highest  
9 employment of any industry in the state; and

10 WHEREAS Alaska commercial fishermen, especially trollers, depend for  
11 their livelihood on the North Pacific chinook (king) salmon; and

12 WHEREAS, since 1977, the fishery management plan and amendments imple-  
13 mented by the Secretary of Commerce under the Fishery Conservation and Manage-  
14 ment Act of 1976 have resulted in substantial reductions in the harvest of  
15 chinook salmon in the fishery conservation zone off the coast of Southeast  
16 Alaska; and

17 WHEREAS, in 1981, Alaska commercial fishermen suffered more than a 15  
18 percent reduction from the 1980 allowable harvest of chinook salmon; and

19 WHEREAS the North Pacific Fishery Management Council and the Alaska  
20 Board of Fisheries, in joint session, voted to direct the National Marine  
21 Fisheries Service, Alaska Region, and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
22 to manage the Yakutat-Southeast Alaska chinook salmon fishery toward the  
23 lower end of the 1981 optimum yield range with a target of 255,500 chinook  
24 salmon, which would be a 20 percent reduction in yield since 1980; and

25 WHEREAS Alaska has established a plan for the rebuilding of depressed  
26 Canadian and Southeastern Alaska natural chinook stocks and has managed its  
27 fishery in accordance with this plan; and

28 WHEREAS chinook escapements in British Columbia are only one-third of  
29 the optimum, due primarily to chronic overharvest by Canadian fisheries; and

1       WHEREAS Canada has not established a plan for the rebuilding of its  
2 severely depressed chinook salmon stocks; and

3       WHEREAS Canadian troll, net, recreational and Indian fisheries are the  
4 major North Pacific coast harvesters of chinook salmon, averaging some 1.8  
5 million fish per year; and

6       WHEREAS Canadian commercial and recreational fishermen throughout British  
7 Columbia have not experienced a regulatory reduction comparable to that  
8 experienced by Alaskan fishermen; and

9       WHEREAS Canadian commercial fishermen continue to harvest chinook salmon  
10 in great quantities, despite reductions imposed on Alaskan and other American  
11 commercial fishermen for the benefit of all who participate in the fishery;  
12 and

13       WHEREAS the less stringently regulated Canadian harvest and interception  
14 of chinook salmon poses a severe economic threat to commercial fishermen in  
15 Alaska and other Pacific coast states; and

16       WHEREAS salmon interception treaty negotiations between the United  
17 States and Canada have continued for several years without resolving the  
18 international dispute over the harvest of chinook salmon; and

19       WHEREAS the Columbia River chinook salmon stocks have been seriously  
20 depleted by habitat degradation caused by hydroelectric development on the  
21 Columbia River; and

22       WHEREAS the management authorities on the Columbia River have not been  
23 successful in explaining or rectifying adult and juvenile salmon losses in  
24 the river due to habitat degradation and illegal fishing problems; and

25       WHEREAS a major barrier to achieving a United States-Canada salmon  
26 agreement which would address North Pacific coast conservation problems is  
27 the allowable level of United States interception of Fraser River salmon in  
28 Puget Sound;

29       BE IT RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully requests

1 the North Pacific Fishery Management Council and the Alaska Board of Fisher-  
2 ies to direct the National Marine Fisheries Service, Alaska Region, and the  
3 Alaska Department of Fish and Game to manage the Yakutat-Southeast Alaska  
4 chinook salmon fishery at the 1980 optimum yield range; and be it

5 FURTHER RESOLVED that the President of the United States is respectfully  
6 requested to direct the Secretary of Commerce to disapprove any amendments or  
7 modifications to the fishery management plan submitted by the North Pacific  
8 Fishery Management Council if the amendments would reduce the harvest of  
9 chinook salmon in the Yakutat-Southeast Alaska Region below the 1981 level;  
10 and be it

11 FURTHER RESOLVED that the chairman of the Alaska Board of Fisheries is  
12 respectfully requested to reconvene the Alaska Board of Fisheries to reinsti-  
13 tute the optimum yield of chinook salmon in the Yakutat-Southeast Alaska  
14 region at the 1980 level; and be it

15 FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully requests  
16 the Department of State to move toward a speedy resolution of the United  
17 States-Canada salmon interception issues; and be it

18 FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska Congressional delegation work with the  
19 Congressional delegations of the State of Washington and the State of Oregon  
20 to ensure that a successful plan is implemented to reverse the unexplained  
21 mortalities of adult chinook salmon in the Columbia River.

22 COPIES of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Ronald Reagan,  
23 President of the United States; to the Honorable Malcolm Baldrige, Secretary  
24 of Commerce; to Mr. Clem Tillion, Chairman, North Pacific Fishery Management  
25 Council; to Mr. Nick Szabo, Chairman of the Alaska Board of Fisheries; to  
26 Mr. Ronald Skoog, Commissioner of Fish and Game; and to the Honorable Ted  
27 Stevens and the Honorable Frank Murkowski, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable  
28 Don Young, U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.  
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