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Referred: House Special
Committee on Fisheries
and Resources

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1 IN THE HOUSE

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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 31

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IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

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THIRTEENTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

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Requesting renegotiation of the proposed

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United States-Canada salmon interception

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treaty and rejection in its present

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form.

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

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WHEREAS the commercial salmon industry is an integral and important

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part of the economy of Alaska; and

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WHEREAS the proposed treaty between the United States and Canada

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concerning Pacific salmon calls upon Southeast Alaska's salmon fishermen to

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take further reductions in harvest, while calling upon Canadian fishermen

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to take only their first reduction; and

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WHEREAS the Southeast Alaska trollers have already been compelled to

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make considerable unilateral reductions in their harvests of chinook salmon

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for the sake of conservation, while Canadian fishermen have been allowed

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comparatively unrestricted harvest of the same resource; and

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WHEREAS chinook salmon conservation measures proposed in the treaty

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are based on catch statistics for years in which Canadian catches were at

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record high levels and their fishery was expanding, while during the same

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years the Alaskan fishery was already being restricted; and

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WHEREAS under the proposed treaty a substantial portion of Stikine

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River salmon, which traditionally has been harvested by United States

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gillnetters, would be allocated to a recently established Canadian fishery

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without compensation to the United States; and

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WHEREAS the proposed treaty does not preclude the possibility of an

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expansion of the Canadian gillnet fishery on the Taku River and a reduction

1 in allowable harvest by United States gillnetters; and

2 WHEREAS, although the provisions of the proposed treaty addressing
3 Yukon River salmon require an accounting of United States and Canadian
4 interests in those salmon prior to the effective date of the treaty, the
5 United States and Canada possess virtually no biological information upon
6 which to base such an accounting; and

7 WHEREAS there are no guarantees in the proposed treaty that United
8 States fishermen will automatically and directly benefit from their own
9 successful fisheries enhancement projects; and

10 WHEREAS all commercial salmon gear groups have expressed opposition to
11 certain provisions in the proposed treaty; and

12 WHEREAS the proposed treaty does not address the issue of high seas
13 foreign interception of all species of salmon; and

14 WHEREAS the language in the proposed treaty is not sufficiently speci-
15 fic to insure the conservation and rational management sought by the par-
16 ties to the treaty; and

17 WHEREAS implementation of the proposed treaty would have a disastrous
18 economic impact on many Alaskan fishermen; and

19 WHEREAS it is vitally important that a treaty transferring significant
20 management authority from the state to an international commission include
21 clear safeguards to protect Alaska's fisheries; and

22 WHEREAS the Alaska State Legislature recognizes the value of a coast-
23 wide agreement and the need to work towards the development of a fair
24 treaty;

25 BE IT RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully requests
26 the Governor of the State of Alaska to urge greater consideration of
27 Alaska's interests in the proposed United States-Canada salmon interception
28 treaty; and be it

29 FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska Senate delegation in Congress is

1 respectfully requested to use its best efforts to prevent ratification of
2 the United States-Canada salmon interception treaty by the United States
3 Senate in its present form; and be it

4 FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature respectfully requests the Secre-
5 tary of State to seek reopening of United States-Canada salmon treaty
6 negotiations, with renewed efforts to secure terms to better protect the
7 Alaska fishing industry.

8 COPIES of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable George
9 Shultz, Secretary of State; and to the Honorable Ted Stevens and the Hon-
10 orable Frank Murkowski, U. S. Senators, members of the Alaska Senate dele-
11 gation in Congress; and to the Honorable William Sheffield, Governor of the
12 State of Alaska.