

Introduced: 4/23/86
Referred: Resources

1 IN THE SENATE

BY THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 50

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IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

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FOURTEENTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

5

Relating to the incidental catch of

6

high-value fish stocks within the United

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States exclusive economic zone.

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

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WHEREAS art. VIII, sec. 2, Constitution of the State of Alaska, requires the Alaska State Legislature to provide for the utilization, development, and conservation of all natural resources belonging to the state for the maximum benefit of the people of the state; and

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WHEREAS fisheries are Alaska's most important renewable natural resource; and

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WHEREAS the salmon, halibut, and crab fisheries have traditionally provided a major source of employment and income for Alaska fishermen; and

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WHEREAS the harvestable surplus of every salmon stock of Alaska origin, and of halibut and crab, are fully used by United States fishermen; and

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WHEREAS trawlers incidentally harvest a significant number of salmon of Alaska origin, and of halibut, crab, and other high-value species worth millions of dollars while targeting groundfish in the United States exclusive economic zone; and

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WHEREAS the incidental harvest of salmon of Alaska origin, and of halibut and crab, by groundfish trawlers in the United States exclusive economic zone is adversely affecting the resource; and

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WHEREAS at times the incidental catch of high-value species by groundfish trawlers in the United States exclusive economic zone has exceeded the catch of these species allocated for Alaska fishermen; and

1 WHEREAS the incidental catch of salmon of Alaska origin and of hali-
2 but, crab, and other high-value species significantly and adversely affect
3 Alaska residents who depend upon them for their livelihood, particularly
4 residents of villages in western Alaska, many of whom have annual incomes
5 that average below federal poverty guidelines; and

6 WHEREAS United States fishermen are becoming increasingly involved in
7 the harvest of groundfish in the United States exclusive economic zone; and

8 WHEREAS it is in the best interest of the state to support the in-
9 volvement of United States trawlers in the bottom-fishing industry and to
10 assure that the fishery is developed in a manner consistent with maintain-
11 ing and protecting traditional fisheries; and

12 WHEREAS the development of a new fishery for United States trawlers
13 involved in the harvest of groundfish should not be at the expense of the
14 traditional fisheries of salmon, crab, halibut, and other high-value spe-
15 cies; and

16 WHEREAS the experience with the foreign fishing fleet has demonstrated
17 the ability to reduce significantly the incidental catch of salmon of
18 Alaska origin, halibut, crab, and other high-value species without adverse-
19 ly affecting the fishery; and

20 WHEREAS the Magnuson Fishery Conservation and Management Act is de-
21 signed to maximize economic benefits to United States citizens from the use
22 of United States fisheries resources; and

23 WHEREAS the Magnuson Fishery Conservation and Management Act assigns
24 the Secretary of Commerce a nondiscretionary duty to enforce the provisions
25 of that Act to significantly reduce the incidental catch of salmon of
26 Alaska origin, halibut, crab, and other high-value species by trawlers
27 involved in the harvest of groundfish; and

28 WHEREAS the North Pacific Fishery Management Council has the respon-
29 sibility of implementing the Magnuson Fishery Conservation and Management

1 Act and has the authority to implement measures to significantly reduce the
2 incidental catch of salmon of Alaska origin, halibut, crab, and other
3 high-value species by trawlers involved in the harvest of groundfish;

4 BE IT RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully requests
5 the Secretary of Commerce and the North Pacific Fishery Management Council
6 to enforce the provisions of the Magnuson Fishery Conservation and Manage-
7 ment Act and to take quick and decisive action to significantly reduce the
8 level of incidental catch of salmon of Alaska origin, halibut, crab, and
9 other high-value species by groundfish trawlers in the United States exclu-
10 sive economic zone; and be it

11 FURTHER RESOLVED that the United States Department of Commerce and the
12 North Pacific Fishery Management Council are respectfully requested to
13 develop and enforce specific measures that significantly reduce the inci-
14 dental catch of high-value species by trawlers and other vessels engaged in
15 ground-fishing that have the least adverse affect on the ability of domes-
16 tic trawlers to engage in the ground-fishing industry; and be it

17 FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully re-
18 quests the Governor of Alaska to aggressively pursue every possible means,
19 including judicial action, of persuading the Secretary of Commerce and the
20 North Pacific Fishery Management Council to enforce the provisions of the
21 Magnuson Fishery Conservation and Management Act to significantly reduce
22 the incidental catch of Alaska salmon, crab, halibut, and other high-value
23 species by the groundfish fleets operating in the United States exclusive
24 economic zone, with the least adverse impact on the ability of United
25 States trawlers to participate in the ground-fishing industry; and be it

26 FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature requests the
27 Governor of Alaska to aggressively pursue every possible means of assisting
28 Alaska fishermen who are participating in the ground-fishing industry to
29 significantly reduce the incidental harvest of salmon, crab, halibut, and

1 other high-value species, without adversely affecting their ability to
2 participate in the ground-fishing industry.

3 COPIES of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Malcolm
4 Baldrige, Secretary of Commerce; Jim Campbell, Chairman, North Pacific
5 Fishery Management Council; and to the Honorable Ted Stevens and the
6 Honorable Frank Murkowski, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young, U.S.
7 Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.