

Introduced: 3/27/87  
Referred: Resources

5-0939A

BY BINKLEY, JONES, HENSLEY, KERTTULA,  
BENNETT, STURGULEWSKI, FISCHER, ABOOD,  
HALFORD, ELIASON, COGHILL, ZHAROFF,  
FAIKS, DUNCAN AND RODEY

1 IN THE SENATE

2

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 34

3

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

4

FIFTEENTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

5

Relating to the interception of Alaska

6

salmon on the high seas.

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

8

WHEREAS salmon is one of Alaska's most important natural resources;

9 and

10

WHEREAS Alaska salmon are fully utilized in domestic fisheries and

11

constitute the primary economic base of many coastal and river communities

12

in the state and a principal component of the subsistence economy of most

13

villages in the state; and

14

WHEREAS some western Alaska salmon stocks are so severely depressed

15

that special conservation measures are again required this year, including

16

the elimination of certain directed commercial salmon fisheries and possi-

17

ble additional subsistence restrictions; and

18

WHEREAS the Alaska Department of Fish and Game estimates that total

19

losses to the Kuskokwim fishery from these restrictions may be as much as

20

\$1,000,000 this year in a fishery in which the total paid to fishermen

21

averages \$3,000,000 per year; and

22

WHEREAS the Yukon and Kuskokwim region in western Alaska is one of the

23

most economically disadvantaged in the United States, where commercial

24

fisheries are the single most important source of cash income, yet produce

25

an average of less than \$7,000 per fisherman per year; and

26

WHEREAS it is estimated that the Japanese land-based and mother ship

27

fisheries, while targeting other salmon species, intercept approximately

28

100,000 western Alaska chinook salmon annually with additional uncounted

29

but substantial dropout mortality; and

1       WHEREAS recently concluded renegotiations between the United States  
2 and Japan regarding high seas salmon fall far short of the goal of sub-  
3 stantially reducing interceptions of North American salmon and steelhead by  
4 the high seas fleets of Japan; and

5       WHEREAS it is estimated that the renegotiations in their present form  
6 will reduce no more than 50 percent of known interceptions over an eight-  
7 year period; and

8       WHEREAS the renegotiation agreements do not reduce substantially the  
9 interceptions in the United States exclusive economic zone, remove the  
10 Japanese fleets from the central Bering Sea within an acceptable time  
11 frame, nor move the land-based Japanese salmon fishery 10 degrees further  
12 west, which is necessary in order to substantially reduce Alaska salmon  
13 interceptions; and

14       WHEREAS for the past several years, United States observer coverage  
15 has been allowed on Japanese catcher boats in the international waters of  
16 the Bering Sea; however, Japan now refuses to renew this agreement, which  
17 leaves the United States with no ability to monitor catch levels or the  
18 dumping of salmon to avoid chinook harvest quotas in these waters; and

19       WHEREAS, according to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, conser-  
20 vation problems of the Kuskokwim and upper Yukon chinook stocks are worse  
21 than were known during the recent renegotiations, and additional protec-  
22 tions of the Kuskokwim and upper Yukon chinook stocks are warranted; and

23       WHEREAS the Japanese high seas salmon fleets take a large number of  
24 marine mammals and diving sea birds incidental to their salmon harvest; and

25       WHEREAS a U.S. Department of Commerce administrative law judge recent-  
26 ly recommended a reduced quota of certain marine mammals that can be taken  
27 by the Japanese high seas salmon fleets;

28       BE IT RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully requests  
29 National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Administrator Anthony J.

1 Calio to impose at least the restrictions recommended by the U.S. Depart-  
2 ment of Commerce administrative law judge in the issuance of a marine  
3 mammal permit to the Japanese because of the severe and immediate conserva-  
4 tion measures needed to protect certain western Alaska salmon stocks and  
5 the lack of protection afforded to those stocks through the recent renegoti-  
6 ation process with Japan regarding interceptions of Alaska salmon; and be  
7 it

8       FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully re-  
9 quests that Administrator Calio release the marine mammal permit only if  
10 United States observers are permitted to be stationed on Japanese catcher  
11 boats and processing ships in international waters and in the United States  
12 exclusive economic zone in sufficient numbers to ensure 95 percent accuracy  
13 in reporting; and be it

14       FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully re-  
15 quests the Congress to provide continued funding for the United States high  
16 seas observer program and other salmon programs, including high seas tag-  
17 ging studies, scale pattern analyses, and full laboratory analyses of whole  
18 fish, to better determine continental origins of salmon migrating in the  
19 high seas fishery area and to further define the magnitude of the Alaska  
20 salmon interception problem by the Japanese high seas salmon and other  
21 intercept fleets.

22       COPIES of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Ronald  
23 Reagan, President of the United States; the Honorable George Shultz, U.S.  
24 Secretary of State; the Honorable Malcolm Baldrige, U.S. Secretary of  
25 Commerce; to Dr. Anthony J. Calio, Administrator, National Oceanic and  
26 Atmospheric Administration, Department of Commerce; the Honorable Robert C.  
27 Byrd, U.S. Senate Majority Leader; the Honorable Jim Wright, Speaker of the  
28 U.S. House of Representatives; and to the Honorable Ted Stevens and the  
29 Honorable Frank Murkowski, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young, U.S.

**1 Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.**