

Original sponsors: Binkley, Jones,
Sturgulewski, et al.

1 IN THE SENATE BY THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE
2 HOUSE CS FOR CS FOR SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 6 (Resources)
3 IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA
4 SIXTEENTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION
5 Relating to the interception of Alaska
6 salmon and steelhead on the high seas.
7 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:
8 WHEREAS most salmon and steelhead harvested on the high seas originate
9 in the United States, the Soviet Union, or Canada; and
10 WHEREAS salmon and steelhead are among Alaska's most important natural
11 resources and are a vital part of the commercial and sport fishing indus-
12 tries of the entire western coast of the United States that contribute
13 billions of dollars to the national economy each year; and
14 WHEREAS Alaska salmon and steelhead are fully utilized in domestic
15 fisheries, constitute the primary economic base of many coastal and river
16 communities in the state, are a principal component of the subsistence
17 economy of most villages in the state, and play a key role in the state's
18 developing tourist industry; and
19 WHEREAS high seas harvests of Alaska salmon defeat the state's careful
20 management program for salmon and the rebuilding program for wild stocks
21 and deprive the state of an economic return on its investment in the fish-
22 ing industry; and
23 WHEREAS some western Alaska salmon stocks are so severely depressed
24 that special conservation measures have been required, including the elim-
25 ination or severe reduction of certain directed commercial salmon fisheries
26 on the Yukon, Kuskokwim, and Tanana Rivers, and possible additional re-
27 strictions on subsistence fisheries may be required; the Yukon-Kuskokwim
28 region in western Alaska is one of the most economically disadvantaged
29 areas in the United States, where commercial fishing is the single most

1 important source of cash income, yet produces an average of less than
2 \$7,000 per fisherman per year; and

3 WHEREAS Bristol Bay has the largest sockeye salmon run in the world,
4 but still has significant conservation and management problems facing the
5 fishery; sockeye salmon is of such economic importance that even a small
6 percent of loss due to high seas fishing would devastate the local economy;
7 and

8 WHEREAS Kodiak is the second largest seafood port in the United States
9 and has been traditionally dependent on fishing, particularly salmon fish-
10 ing, and salmon fishing in Kodiak and the Alaska Peninsula form the eco-
11 nomic base for the communities of Southwest Alaska; and

12 WHEREAS the recent poor strength of salmon runs in Southeast Alaska,
13 including pink salmon returns that were 66 percent below forecasts, has
14 caused severe economic hardship for the salmon fleet of Southeast Alaska
15 and may be attributable to high seas drift net harvests; and

16 WHEREAS salmon is a vital part of the economy of the Cook Inlet and
17 Prince William Sound regions; the forecasted runs for pink salmon in Prince
18 William Sound were 22,370,000 fish, but only 13,500,000 fish actually
19 returned; and uncontrolled harvests of salmon on the high seas create
20 conservation and management concerns and threaten the economic well-being
21 of the commercial, sport, subsistence, and personal use fisheries in the
22 Cook Inlet and Prince William Sound regions; and

23 WHEREAS poor salmon runs in Alaska in 1988, the increased incidence of
24 net marked salmon and steelhead, and recent reports of large quantities of
25 illegally harvested salmon being sold in Europe and Asia have heightened
26 public concern over high seas interception of salmon and steelhead; and

27 WHEREAS the illegal harvest and sale of American salmon by foreign
28 fishing fleets are undercutting international sales of salmon harvested by
29 American fishermen and sold by American processors and are having signifi-

1 cant adverse economic and social effects on the residents of Alaska,
2 Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and California; and

3 WHEREAS it is estimated that the Japanese land-based and mothership
4 fisheries alone could still be intercepting as many as 2,000,000 Alaska
5 salmon each year; and

6 WHEREAS there has not been international monitoring of squid fleets on
7 the high seas or enforcement of the prohibition against harvest of anadro-
8 mous species on the high seas; and

9 WHEREAS the Japanese, Taiwanese, and South Korean squid fleets now
10 total more than 700 vessels, trail more than 10,000 miles of gill net that
11 is just the right size to capture immature salmon on the high seas, and are
12 virtually unregulated and unmonitored; and

13 WHEREAS tens of thousands of marine mammals and hundreds of thousands
14 of sea birds die in these gill nets each year; and

15 WHEREAS Japan has asked the International North Pacific Fisheries
16 Commission to expand Japan's legal salmon fishing areas in the North Paci-
17 fic Ocean and convert Japan's mothership fleet on the high seas to a land-
18 based fleet and has informed the United States that Japan intends to extend
19 the fishing areas of the Japanese squid fleet farther north; and

20 WHEREAS Japan has been denied permission to fish within the United
21 States Exclusive Economic Zone as a result of a federal court decision that
22 held that the United States Department of Commerce did not have the author-
23 ity to issue permits allowing the incidental take of depleted marine mam-
24 mals; and

25 WHEREAS the United States and the Soviet Union have recently signed a
26 comprehensive fisheries agreement that calls for joint cooperation in
27 conserving the salmon resources of both nations and have recognized that
28 the harvest of salmon on the high seas is wasteful and irrational and that
29 salmon should be harvested only within a nation's 200-mile exclusive

1 economic zone; and

2 WHEREAS the Soviet Union has said that elimination of the interception
3 of its salmon by foreign fishermen is one of its top priorities; and

4 WHEREAS customary international law generally prohibits nations from
5 harvesting anadromous species on the high seas; and

6 WHEREAS the harvest of nonanadromous species can be accomplished
7 without the harvest of anadromous species, and the cessation of high seas
8 interception of salmon and steelhead stocks can be accomplished without
9 causing economic dislocation; and

10 WHEREAS customary international law recognizes that all nations have a
11 duty to cooperate in conserving fish stocks on the high seas, including
12 salmon and steelhead stocks; and

13 WHEREAS the Magnuson Fishery Conservation and Management Act, that
14 regulates fisheries in the United States' 200-mile Exclusive Economic Zone,
15 is due for reauthorization by the Congress in 1989; and

16 WHEREAS the Congress will be holding oversight hearings on the Drift-
17 net Impact Monitoring, Assessment, and Control Act of 1987 that required
18 negotiations with the governments of South Korea, Taiwan, and Japan for the
19 purpose of curbing illegal and unregulated squid fishing operations; and

20 WHEREAS current United States enforcement activities and observer
21 coverage in both the salmon and squid fisheries are minimal due to serious
22 budget cuts by the Congress; and

23 WHEREAS the most effective long-term solution for protection of Ameri-
24 can salmon and steelhead stocks on the high seas is the elimination of high
25 seas fishing for these stocks;

26 BE IT RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully requests
27 the American section of the International North Pacific Fisheries Commis-
28 sion to oppose expansion of the Japanese salmon fishing areas and to oppose
29 Japan's proposal to convert its mothership fleet on the high seas to a

1 land-based fleet unless certain conditions are met, including, but not
2 limited to, an agreement to cease all high seas directed and incidental
3 salmon fishing by 1992, to allow observers to be present on vessels of the
4 squid fleet and the proposed and existing land-based fleets with at least
5 50 percent vessel coverage in each such fleet in order to collect scien-
6 tifically valid data, and to take all steps necessary to cease the direct
7 and incidental take of marine mammals and seabirds; and be it

8 FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully re-
9 quests the Congress not to allow the Japanese to fish for salmon and steel-
10 head within the United States Exclusive Economic Zone; and be it

11 FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully re-
12 quests the United States Department of State to immediately begin negotiat-
13 ing a joint enforcement agreement, that provides for cooperative monitoring
14 of the high seas squid drift net fisheries and for cooperative enforcement
15 of laws and agreements, with the Soviet Union and other cooperating coun-
16 tries in order to prevent illegal fishing and retention of salmon and
17 steelhead in the North Pacific Ocean; and be it

18 FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully re-
19 quests the United States Department of State to begin negotiating with all
20 salmon producing countries for an international treaty that would ban all
21 high seas salmon fishing; and be it

22 FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully re-
23 quests the Congress to amend the Magnuson Fishery Conservation and Man-
24 agement Act (16 U.S.C. 1801 - 1882) to ensure that United States jurisdic-
25 tion over American anadromous species on the high seas will be effectively
26 enforced to stop interception of salmon and steelhead on the high seas; and
27 be it

28 FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully re-
29 quests the United States Department of State and the Congress to take

1 whatever actions are necessary to control the illegal and unregulated
2 fishing activities of the South Korean, Taiwanese, and Japanese squid
3 fleets; and be it

4 FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully re-
5 quests the Congress to expand the Pelly Amendment to

6 (1) provide for sanctions against foreign nations whose fisher-
7 men intercept anadromous species on the high seas or who refuse to cooper-
8 ate with the United States in developing and enforcing international fish-
9 ing regulations to prevent interception of anadromous species on the high
10 seas; and

11 (2) include in the sanctions against those nations embargoes on
12 fisheries and other products imported from those nations; and be it

13 FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully re-
14 quests the Congress to provide continued funding for the United States high
15 seas observer program and other salmon research programs and to specifi-
16 cally earmark appropriations for enforcement of high seas conservation
17 agreements by the United States Coast Guard.

18 COPIES of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable George Bush,
19 President of the United States; the Honorable Dan Quayle, Vice-President of
20 the United States and President of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable James A.
21 Baker, III, U. S. Secretary of State; the Honorable Edward E. Wolfe, Amba-
22 sador for Fisheries and the Ocean, U. S. Department of State; the Honorable
23 Robert A. Mosbacher, U. S. Secretary of Commerce; the Honorable William E.
24 Evans, Administrator, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, U.S.
25 Department of Commerce; the Honorable George J. Mitchell, U. S. Senate
26 Majority Leader; the Honorable Jim Wright, Speaker of the U. S. House of
27 Representatives; the Honorable Clem Tillion, Chairman of the American
28 Section, International North Pacific Fisheries Commission; the Honorable
29 George Deukmejian, Governor of the State of California; the Honorable Leo

1 T. McCarthy, President of the Senate of the State of California; the Honor-
2 able Willie Lewis Brown, Jr., Speaker of the Assembly of the State of
3 California; the Honorable Cecil D. Andrus, Governor of the State of Idaho;
4 the Honorable C.L. Otter, President of the Senate of the State of Idaho;
5 the Honorable Tom Boyd, Speaker of the House of Representatives of the
6 State of Idaho; the Honorable Neil Goldschmidt, Governor of the State of
7 Oregon; the Honorable John Kitzhaber, President of the Senate of the State
8 of Oregon; the Honorable Vera Katz, Speaker of the House of Representatives
9 of the State of Oregon; the Honorable Booth Gardner, Governor of the State
10 of Washington; the Honorable Joel Pritchard, President of the Senate of the
11 State of Washington; the Honorable Joseph E. King, Speaker of the House of
12 Representative of the State of Washington; and to the Honorable Ted Stevens
13 and the Honorable Frank Murkowski, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don
14 Young, U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.