

HJR

6

COOL Testimony
By Tabitha Williams

Having grown up on the docks in a fishing village, this bill is especially important to me. My dad is a fisherman and my mother works at the fuel dock. My friends and I have been deck-handing on fishing boats since we were old enough to gaff humpies. All of these jobs are supported by the fishing industry. Even the tourist businesses depend on the Alaska's seafood reputation to attract their clientele. That is why we, as Alaskans, must strive to protect and promote our state's most valuable resource.

Farmed fish has been linked to cancer-causing toxins and high mercury levels. Do we want our natural, healthy, wild salmon to be associated with the notoriously bad press farmed fish has earned over recent years? Or do we want to make a distinction between the two and allow Alaskans to show their support and pride of the hard-working fishermen in our state. I think we deserve a choice.

Representative Beth Kerttula

Alaska State Legislature District 3

MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 16, 2005

TO: Senator Tom Wagoner, Chair
Senate Resources Committee

FROM: Representative Beth Kerttula *Thank you!
Beth*

RE: Hearing Request for HJR 6, Labeling Of Fish Products

I respectfully request that House Joint Resolution 6 be scheduled for a hearing in the Senate Resources Committee.

Attached you will find:

- CS HJR 6 (FSH)
- HJR 6
- Zero fiscal notes from the Departments of Environmental Conservation and Fish & Game
- Sponsor Statement
- Letters of support from United Fishermen of Alaska, Alaska Trollers Association, Southeast Alaska Fishermen's Alliance, United Southeast Alaska Gillnetters, Cordova District Fishermen United, and Oceana

Thank you for your consideration.

FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA
2005 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Fiscal Note Number: 1
 Bill Version: CSHJR 6(FSH)
 (H) Publish Date: 2/2/05

Revision Date/Time (Note if correction): _____ Dept. Affected: Environmental Conservation
 Title Labeling of fish products RDU: Environmental Health
 Component: Food Safety and Sanitation
 Sponsor Rep Kerttula
 Requester House Fisheries Component No. 2343

Expenditures/Revenues (Thousands of Dollars)

Note: Amounts do not include inflation unless otherwise noted below

OPERATING EXPENDITURES	FY 2006	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011
Personal Services	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Travel	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Contractual	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Supplies	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Equipment	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Land & Structures	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Grants & Claims	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Miscellaneous	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
TOTAL OPERATING	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

CAPITAL EXPENDITURES						
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CHANGE IN REVENUES ()	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
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FUND SOURCE (Thousands of Dollars)

1002 Federal Receipts	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1003 GF Match	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1004 GF	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1005 GF/Program Receipts	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1037 GF/Mental Health	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Other (Specify Type--Do not abbreviate)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
TOTAL	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Estimate of any current year (FY2005) cost: 0.0

Mark this box (X) if funding for this bill is included in the Governor's FY 2006 budget proposal:

POSITIONS

Full-time	0	0	0	0	0	0
Part-time	0	0	0	0	0	0
Temporary	0	0	0	0	0	0

ANALYSIS: (Attach a separate page if necessary)

This House Joint Resolution has no fiscal impact on the department.

Prepared by: Kristin Ryan, Director
 Division: Environmental Health
 Approved by: Kurt Fredriksson
 Agency: Department of Environmental Conservation

Phone (907) 269-7644
 Date/Time 1/25/05 11:59 AM
 Date 1/25/2005

FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA
2005 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Fiscal Note Number: 2
 Bill Version: CSHJR 6(FSH)
 (H) Publish Date: 2/2/05

Revision Date/Time (Note if correction): _____ Dept. Affected: Fish and Game
 Title Labeling of Fish Products RDU _____
 Component _____
 Sponsor Representative Kerttula
 Requester House Special Committee on Fisheries Component No. _____

Expenditures/Revenues (Thousands of Dollars)

Note: Amounts do not include inflation unless otherwise noted below.

OPERATING EXPENDITURES	FY 2006	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011
Personal Services						
Travel						
Contractual						
Supplies						
Equipment						
Land & Structures						
Grants & Claims						
Miscellaneous						
TOTAL OPERATING	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

CAPITAL EXPENDITURES						
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CHANGE IN REVENUES ()						
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FUND SOURCE (Thousands of Dollars)

1002 Federal Receipts						
1003 GF Match						
1004 GF						
1005 GF/Program Receipts						
1037 GF/Mental Health						
Other (Specify Type--Do not abbreviate)						
TOTAL	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Estimate of any current year (FY2005) cost: 0.0

Mark this box (X) if funding for this bill is included in the Governor's FY 2006 budget proposal:

POSITIONS

Full-time						
Part-time						
Temporary						

ANALYSIS: (Attach a separate page if necessary)

Passage of this legislation would have no fiscal impact.

Prepared by: Sarah Gilbertson Phone 465-6137
 Division: Legislative Liaison Date/Time 1/25/05 11:47 AM
 Approved by: Acting Commissioner Wayne Regelin Date 1/25/2005
 Agency: Alaska Department of Fish & Game

Representative Beth Kerttula

Alaska State Legislature District 3

HJR 6

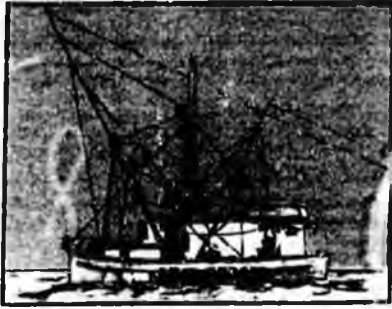
Labeling of Fish Products

Sponsor Statement

As Alaskans, we all know that Alaskan fish tastes better and is healthier than farmed fish. Alaskans have long shown their support of country-of-origin labeling (COOL) and labeling of farmed or wild fish. These national labeling standards will help maintain the vitality of Alaska's fishing industry by allowing consumers to make informed choices in the marketplace.

Proposed regulations for COOL for fish and shellfish include an exclusion for processed food items, which would include canned, smoked, cured, or cooked fish. However, this is a common way to bring the product to the market place and much of the fish available to Americans has been canned, smoked, cured, pouched, or cooked. While a majority of legislators have signed a letter stating concern over this issue, this resolution will be a more formal statement of our concern.

House Joint Resolution 6 supports the timely implementation of COOL and opposes the exclusion of canned smoked, cured, or cooked fish and shellfish from the requirements.



Alaska Trollers Association

130 Seward St., No. 211

Juneau, Alaska 99801

(907) 586-9400

(907) 586-4473 Fax

February 2, 2004

Representative Gabrielle LeDoux, Co-Chair

Representative Bill Thomas, Co-Chair

House Special Committee on Fisheries

Alaska State Legislature

Juneau, AK 99811

Dear Representatives LeDoux, Thomas, and Committee Members:

I am writing to express the Alaska Trollers Association's (ATA) support for HJR6, which advocates labeling of canned and smoked seafood products for country of origin as well as distinguishing between wild and farm raised

ATA has long supported reasonable labeling programs, as a means to provide consumers with information they need and want to make informed choices about the foods they eat. Recent passage by Congress of Country of Origin Labeling (COOL) is a substantial step toward that end.

Unfortunately, the USDA chose during the regulatory drafting process to omit simple canned and smoked seafood products from the list of covered commodities. The USDA considers those foodstuffs to be "processed". While much of Alaska's seafood is canned and smoked, it is not significantly altered and still retains its natural characteristics. It is difficult to believe that those items are what most people consider "processed food" - as they would the protein in some TV dinners, or other products that are blended with other foods, sauces, or chemicals.

Consumers are becoming much more discerning when it comes to selection of seafood, but in the marketplace it is often hard to distinguish where it comes from or how it is harvested. And, this is becoming increasingly difficult as a greater number of species are being raised in more countries around the world. Labeling will provide a service to those people who care to know. And, Alaska seafood is likely to fare well in their purchasing decisions, which is why the state should care.

While ATA strongly supports labeling of seafood, we also appreciate some of the concerns that have been expressed by those who will have to implement the program. Therefore, we support working with others in the food service industry where necessary, to ease unnecessary burdens.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if I can be of assistance on this or other matters.

Best Regards,

Dale Kelley

Executive Director

Cordova District Fishermen United



Celebrating 70 Years of Service to Commercial Fishermen in Cordova, Alaska
P.O. Box 939 Cordova, Alaska 99574 Telephone 907.424.3447 Fax 907.424.3430
E-mail: cdfu@ak.net

January 25, 2005

~~Representative Gabrielle LeDoux, Co-Chair~~
Representative Bill Thomas, Co-Chair
House Fisheries Committee
Alaska State Legislature
State Capitol (Mail stop 3100)
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Representative LeDoux,

Cordova District Fishermen United (CDFU) supports the CS for HJR 6 relating to the labeling of fish products and processed food items containing fish. CDFU, along with United Fishermen of Alaska, has been working for several years to have these type of federal regulations implemented. The American public would like to have their seafood products identified as farmed or wild as well as know what country their seafood was harvested in.

Cordova District Fishermen United represents hundreds of commercial fishermen in Area E Copper River and the Prince William Sound. We support the CS for HJR 6 and appreciate your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Diane Platt
Executive Director

CC: Representative Beth Kerttula



OCEANA

175 SOUTH FRANKLIN STREET, SUITE 418 JUNEAU, ALASKA 99801 907.586.4050 WWW.OCEANA.ORG

January 25, 2005

The Honorable Beth Kerttula
Alaska State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 430
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

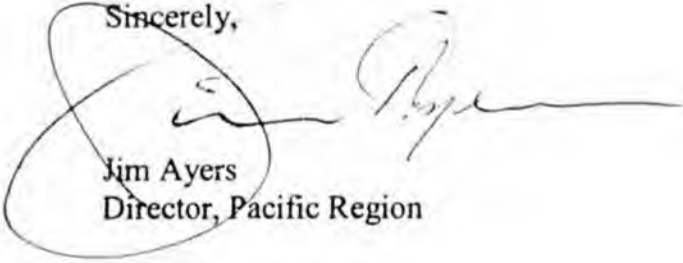
Dear Representative Kerttula:

Thank you for introducing House Joint Resolution 6 (HJR 6), a resolution relating to the labeling of fish products and processed food items containing fish to identify the country of origin and to distinguish between wild and farmed fish and fish products. Oceana, a global non-profit organization dedicated to restoring and protecting the health of the world's oceans, strongly supports this resolution.

Alaska's salmon fisheries are crucial to our economy and to a sustainable existence. Labeling wild Alaska salmon—including canned, smoked, and pouched—is a win-win situation all around. It is good for the health of American consumers in that it allows them to make informed choices about their seafood selections. It is good for Alaska and will help us maintain a strong market for the vibrant fisheries that are so important to our livelihoods and economy. Additionally, it is good for the environment. It is well documented that salmon farms are a source of pollution and allow for foreign invasive Atlantic salmon to escape into Pacific waters. There is no substitute for healthy wild Alaska salmon, whether fresh, frozen, smoked, canned, or pouched.

Oceana fully supports HJR 6. This resolution supports the long-term viability of our critically important salmon fisheries. Thank you for supporting Alaska's fishermen and sustainable oceans.

Sincerely,



Jim Ayers
Director, Pacific Region



PRINTED WITH SOY INK

Southeast Alaska Fishermen's Alliance

9369 North Douglas Highway
Juneau, AK 99801



Phone 907-586-6652

Fax 907-523-1168

E-mail: seafa@gci.net

January 25, 2004

House Special Committee on Fisheries
~~House Resource Committee~~
State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

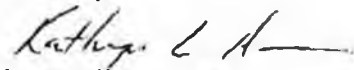
RE: Support for HJR 6

~~The Southeast Alaska Fishermen's Alliance supported the federal Country of Origin Labeling (COOL) legislation that requires labeling of fish and shellfish and distinguishes between wild and farmed fish and shellfish. We support HJR 6 that has the Alaska legislature supporting the implementation of COOL regulations. It is important that the federal government understand during this comment period that the regulations be extended to cover labeling of canned, smoked, and cured products and reverse the current decision that exempts these products.~~

~~We appreciate that the legislature would be willing to send a resolution during this comment period supporting labeling and asking that the labeling be extended to canned and smoked products. Consumers are asking for wild salmon again it is important that the products be labeled so they can make informed choices and receive the product they wish to buy.~~

The Southeast Alaska Fishermen's Alliance is a non-profit membership based ~~fishermen's organization representing permit holders~~ involved in the salmon, crab, shrimp and longline fisheries of Southeast Alaska.

Sincerely,


Kathryn E. Hansen



UNITED FISHERMEN OF ALASKA

January 24, 2005

211 Fourth Street, Suite 110
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1172
(907) 586-2820
(907) 463-2545 Fax
E-Mail: ufa@ufa-fish.org
www.ufa-fish.org

Representative Bill Thomas, Co-Chair
Representative Gabrielle LeDoux, Co-Chair
House Fisheries Committee
Alaska State Legislature
State Capitol (Mail stop 3100)
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Representative Thomas,

United Fishermen of Alaska supports the CS for HJR 6 relating to the labeling of fish products and processed food items containing fish. Americans have expressed their desire to know whether their seafood product is farmed or wild caught as well as to distinguish what country it was harvested in. UFA has been working diligently for the last five years on such regulations which will benefit the northwest commercial fishing salmon industry along with many others.

United Fishermen of Alaska represents 31 Alaska Commercial fishing organizations and hundreds of individual fishermen and fishing related businesses. We support the CS for HJR 6 and thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Mark Vinsel
Executive Director

CC: Representative Beth Kerttula

MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

Alaska Crab Coalition • Alaska Drifters Association • Alaska Longline Fishermen's Association • Alaska Trollers Association • Amertong Kulu • Alsea Processors Association • Bristol Bay Resource
Concerned Area Fishermen • Cordova United Fishermen Union • Crab Rationalization and Buyback Group • Douglas Island Park and Clam • Fishing Vessel Owners Association • Grandish Forum
Kodiak Peninsula Fishermen's Association • Kodiak Regional Aquaculture Association • Kodiak Seiners Association • North Pacific Fisheries Association • North Pacific Scallop Clump Bait
North West Southeast Regional Aquaculture Association • Old Harbor Fishermen's Association • Petersburg Vessel Owners Association • Prince William Sound Aquaculture Corporation
Purse Seine Vessel Owners Association • Seafood Producers Cooperative • Southeast Alaska Herring Seiners Marketing Association • Southeast Alaska Regional Dredge Fisheries Association
Southern Southeast Regional Aquaculture Association • United Canoe Boats • United Salmon Association • United Southeast Alaska Clammers
United Fisheries Development Council • United Gulf of Alaska Fishermen



United Southeast Alaska Gillnetters

P.O. Box 23771, Ketchikan, AK 99901 Phone & Fax (907) 241 2411 Email usa_gillnetters@att.net

January 21, 2005

The Honorable Beth Kerttula
House of Representatives
State Capitol, Room 430
Juneau, AK 99801

Send Via Fax to 465-1748

Dear Representative Kerttula,

The United Southeast Alaska Gillnetters (USAG) is an association of about 150 small business owners who catch salmon by drift gillnetting in Southeast Alaska and market salmon throughout the United States. Many of our members also participate in other fisheries such as crab, shrimp, longline, and dive fisheries. USAG supports HJR 6 which supports the application of the federal country of origin labeling legislation (COOL) to processed as well as unprocessed seafood items. We believe the American consumer wants to know and has the right to know if the fish and seafood products they are purchasing are wild or farm raised. This is particularly important if we are to realize the maximum benefit from ASMI's "wild" Alaska seafood marketing efforts. In trade publication articles, salmon farmers have written that ASMI's "wild" salmon marketing has increased the sales of all salmon because the consumer cannot distinguish the difference between farmed and wild salmon in retail outlets. This is a totally unacceptable situation and we wholeheartedly support your efforts to encourage the federal government to apply the COOL regulations to all seafood products.

We also believe the State of Alaska should continue to work with other agriculture states to have the COOL regulations apply to all food items consumed in this country. Again, thank you for introducing this resolution and for your continuing support of our Alaska seafood industry.

Yours truly,

Kenneth Duckett
Executive Director

cc Representative Bill Thomas
Co-chair House fisheries Committee

Via Fax to 465-2652



Representative Beth Kerttula

Alaska State Legislature District 3

HJR 6

Labeling of Fish Products

Sponsor Statement

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