

**HB**

**252**

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252</subject><comm>HFSH26</comm></target>



# Representative Alan Austerman

## *Alaska State Legislature*

### Sponsor Statement for HB 252

**“An Act relating to the duty of the commissioner of natural resources to administer and supervise promotional and marketing work for agricultural and aquatic farm products.”**

The production of food and food products in Alaska contributes to the economy and well-being of our state. One tool for promoting Alaska’s home-grown products is the “Alaska Grown” slogan for marketing purposes. However, under current Alaska law, oysters, clams and other shellfish products grown in Alaskan waters cannot be promoted as “Alaska Grown.”

House Bill 252 would expand the current efforts of promoting farm-grown products using the “Alaska Grown” slogan to include aquatic farmed, or mariculture, products. This clarifies that aquatic farming products are considered agricultural products for purposes of marketing and promotion. This reflects federal definitions of agriculture, which recognize farmed aquatic products as a component of agricultural production.

Mariculture holds the potential to become a viable industry contributing to the economic security and development of Alaskan coastal communities. Marketing and promotion will be key to this industry’s growth. Shellfish and other mariculture products grown and farmed in Alaska are renewable resources which also promote a healthy and sustainable industry with long term investment in Alaska.

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January 27, 2010

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~ Representing Alaska State House District 36 ~

Akhiok | Igiugig | Iliamna | Karluk | Kodiak | Kokhanok | Larsen Bay | Levelock  
Newhalen | Nondalton | Old Harbor | Ouzinkie | Pedro Bay | Port Alsworth | Port Lions



January 27, 2010

**Representative Alan Austerman**  
Alaska State Capitol  
Juneau, AK 99801

**Dear Representative Austerman:**

The Alaskan Shellfish Growers Association (ASGA) is pleased to endorse your efforts under House Bill 252 to include aquatic farmers under the Alaskan Grown Program.

Representative Harris introduced a similar bill about three years ago that passed the House by a wide margin and died in the Senate. We strongly supported that effort and are pleased that you've decided to give it another try.

The Alaskan Grown language was made necessary by a change in the authority of the Department of Natural Resources regarding promotion of Alaska seafood products. The change in statutory language effectively prohibited DNR from promoting farmed shellfish as a product farmed in Alaska. DNR subsequently allowed shellfish farmers already enrolled in the Alaskan Grown Program to continue using the label, but prohibited the inclusion of additional farming operations.

Alaska oysters are gaining recognition in the marketplace as some of the best available on the half shell. Our ability to penetrate some of the country's best oyster bars comes in large part from the image consumers around the world have of Alaska: pure waters and great seafood. We're proud to label our product as grown in Alaska waters; the label can help.

Thank you for submitting HB 252.

Sincerely,

**Rodger Painter**  
ASGA President

Rodger Painter, president  
Phone: (907) 957-0704

Address: P.O. Box 20704 Juneau, AK 99802-0704  
email: [rodgerpainter@hotmail.com](mailto:rodgerpainter@hotmail.com)