

House Joint Memorials

HOUSE JOINT MEMORIAL NO. 2.

TO THE HONORABLE THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES:

Your Memorialist, the Legislature of the Territory of Alaskan in regular session assembled, respectfully represents:

WHEREAS, the continued use of the floating and standing fish traps in the waters of Alaska makes it impossible for the fishermen of Alaska to sell their fish to the canneries, as a result of which the said fishermen are virtually deprived of the rights which are expressly granted to all citizens of the United States; and,

WHEREAS, the use of such appliances, catching, in many instances over three hundred thousand salmon in a single trap, deters the development of the Territory by placing in the control of a few trap owners the privilege of catching nearly 60% of the entire quantity of fish used in the canneries of Alaska; and,

WHEREAS, nearly all of the trap owners are non-residents or foreign corporations who bring their supplies and labor to the Territory each year from outside the Territory for the short fishing season allowed by regulations, and do not establish homes nor otherwise develop the Territory, nor contribute to the upbuilding of a permanent population of the Territory; and,

WHEREAS, the above arguments apply with equal force to non-resident fishermen using movable gear; and,

WHEREAS, the abolishment of fish traps without the exclusion of non-resident fishermen will not diminish the evils set forth herein; and,

WHEREAS, it is, and always has been, the desire of the bona fide residents of the Territory of Alaska, and of the United States Government, to develop the Territory by fostering and protecting local labor and industry; and,

WHEREAS, the continued use of such appliances gives rise to general dissatisfaction, discontent and actual distress and want among the people of the coastal regions of the Territory, and will finally

result in depleting the country of its inhabitants, both white and Indian, if continued; and,

WHEREAS, the people of the Territory of Alaska have the welfare of their country at heart, and are capable of administering their own affairs, and of administering the fisheries of Alaska by virtue of their connection therewith,

THEREFORE, your Memorialist, the Legislature fo Alaska, respectfully memorializes the Congress of the United States to so amend the present fisheries laws so as to cause the elimination of floating and standing traps as a means of catching salmon in Alaskan waters, and to prohibit any person from fishing for salmon by the use of a seine unless such person is a resident of the Territory of Alaska, the term "resident" to be defined as in the Game and Fish Act, (title 48, section 207, United States Code,) to-wit: "A citizen of the United States who has domiciled in the Territory of Alaska not less than one year for the purpose of making his permanent home therein, or a foreign-born person, not a citizen of the United States who has declared his intention to become a citizen of the United States, and has been domiciled in the Territory of Alaska for a like period and purpose, shall be considered a resident, but if such foreign-born person shall not have been admitted to citizenship within seven years from the date he declared his first intention to become a citizen, he shall thereafter be deemed to be an alien until admitted to citizenship." Also to prohibit the use of any boat for salmon seining of a greater length than fifty feet between perpendiculars, and of a greater beam width than sixteen feet, measurements to be in accordance with the U. S. Customs. Also to prohibit the use of any purse seine of more than two hundred fathoms in length, measured on the cork line and of no greater depth than two hundred fifty meshes. For the purpose of determining depths of seines, measurements will be upon the basis of three and one-half inches stretched measurements between knots, and to otherwise liberalize such laws to the end that the bona fide resident fishermen may make an honest living out of the great natural fishery resources of Alaska.

And your Memorialist will ever pray.

Passed by the House, January 26, 1935.

Passed by the Senate, February 13, 1935.