

STATE OF ALASKA

THE LEGISLATURE

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Resolve No.

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Urging renegotiation of the Convention authorizing the International Pacific Halibut Commission so that foreign fishing of North Pacific halibut stocks is prohibited at the earliest possible time.

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

WHEREAS the United States halibut fishery, of prime economic importance to the state's fishermen, has had an erratic past, and is presently in a depressed state; and

WHEREAS under the current operative Convention between the U. S. and Canada the International Pacific Halibut Commission has the regulatory authority over North Pacific halibut stocks, allowing Canada to participate in the Alaska fishery on a quota basis; and

WHEREAS the Fishery Conservation and Management Act of 1976 (P.L. 94-265) expressly provides that the United States has exclusive fishery management authority within the 200-mile fishery conservation management zone unless surplus stocks exist; and

WHEREAS presently no surplus halibut stocks exist, as the rapid proliferation of gear in recent years has resulted in a United States fleet with sufficient capability to harvest the available fish; and

WHEREAS P.L. 94-265 further provides that the United States shall promptly initiate the renegotiation of any fishery treaty which is inconsistent with P.L. 94-265, or, if that is not possible within a reasonable period of time from April 13, 1976, withdraw from any such treaty according to the terms of the treaty; and

WHEREAS a sufficient period of time has elapsed since the enactment of P.L. 94-265 to allow for renegotiation of the Convention; and

WHEREAS one of the terms of the Convention is that two years must elapse from the time notification to terminate is given; and

WHEREAS this means that, unless renegotiation is effective, at a minimum two more halibut seasons will pass before foreign fishing is stopped; and

WHEREAS renegotiation of the Convention authorizing the International Pacific Halibut Commission could accomplish adequate protection of Alaska halibut stocks without eliminating the essential research aspects of the Convention;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully requests the Secretary of State to call for a renegotiation of the Convention that authorizes the International Pacific Halibut Commission at the earliest possible date so that the regulatory authority for halibut stocks within the 200-mile fishery conservation management zone off Alaska can be placed entirely under the North Pacific Fishery Management Council, or, if that is not possible through renegotiation, that the United States give notice of its desire to terminate the Convention so that the required two-year notification period will begin to run at the earliest possible time.

COPIES of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Jimmy Carter, President of the United States; the Honorable Cyrus Vance, Secretary of State; the Honorable Juanita Kreps, Secretary of Commerce; the North Pacific Fishery Management Council; and to the Honorable Ted Stevens and the Honorable Mike Gravel, U. S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young, U. S. Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.