

STATE OF ALASKA

THE LEGISLATURE

1986

Source

Legislative
Resolve No.

SJR 45

LR 49



Relating to compensation for injuries to commercial fishermen.

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

WHEREAS the United States commercial fishing industry is facing a crisis in the cost and availability of marine insurance; and

WHEREAS the Alaska commercial fishing industry is experiencing severe economic costs as a result of these problems; and

WHEREAS these costs are having a detrimental impact on the people and the communities of the state; and

WHEREAS the most troublesome part of the marine insurance crisis is the method by which injured fishermen are compensated and the resultant impact on the protection and indemnity insurance (P&I) policy; and

WHEREAS the system for compensating injured commercial fishermen is established under federal law; and

WHEREAS a 1957 survey and study sponsored by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service concluded that the system "...disregards completely the financial, economic, and operational characteristics of the industry"; and

WHEREAS the study also stated that "the system is unjust because it is wasteful and slow and it fosters misunderstanding and bitterness between employer and employees"; and

WHEREAS the study recommended that the system be replaced by a more equitable one; and

WHEREAS a more detailed study sponsored by the National

Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration in 1976 recommended the consideration of an alternative liability system; and

WHEREAS a 1985 study sponsored by the National Council of Fishing Vessel Safety and Insurance also recommends sweeping changes in the existing system of compensating injured fishermen and warns that "This is ... probably the last time this issue will be presented before Congress. Either the system will be changed, or the industry will not be strong enough to return"; and

WHEREAS the Congress is presently evaluating the problem and considering possible solutions to it;

BE IT RESOLVED by the Alaska State Legislature that Congress is respectfully requested to take whatever action is necessary to revise the present system for compensating injured fishermen so that it will be fair to commercial fishermen and affordable by the vessel owners.