

STATE OF ALASKA

THE LEGISLATURE

1987

Source

SCS CSHJR 15 (Res) am S

Legislative
Resolve No.

14



Relating to high seas drift nets.

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

WHEREAS Alaska's salmon resources have a tremendous value to all of the residents of the state; and

WHEREAS Alaska commercial fishermen depend upon healthy salmon populations to maintain their incomes and lifestyles; and

WHEREAS shore-based and floating processors rely on healthy salmon populations to keep their industry healthy, which, in turn, promotes a healthy Alaska economy; and

WHEREAS numerous rural communities in Alaska depend upon a reliable subsistence salmon harvest for their most basic nutritional needs and for the continuation of their traditional way of life; and

WHEREAS numerous salmon stocks, including, among others, Kuskokwim River salmon and Yukon River salmon, are showing a marked and dangerous trend of annual declines in the number of returning fish; and

WHEREAS high seas drift nets widely used by foreign fishing vessels in the fishery conservation zone indiscriminately harvest mixed stocks of salmon, containing a high proportion of salmon originating in North America; and

WHEREAS high seas drift nets wastefully kill nontarget fish species, seabirds, and marine mammals, including the Pribilof Island fur seal; and

WHEREAS these nets are made of nonbiodegradable and nondestructible plastics; and

WHEREAS 600 miles of high seas drift nets are estimated to be lost each year, and these nets present a hazard to navigation and continue to catch salmon, other fish, seabirds, and marine mammals; and

WHEREAS there is no reliable means of monitoring the destructive effect of these high seas drift nets on marine animals of the Bering Sea and North Pacific; and

WHEREAS intensive and persistent efforts by the Alaska fishing industry and by environmental groups have been largely unsuccessful in achieving international regulation and reduction of the use of high seas drift nets;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature urgently requests the Congress to pass S. 62, a bill "To improve efforts to monitor, assess, and reduce the adverse impacts of drift nets."

COPIES of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable George Bush, Vice-President of the United States and President of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Jim Wright, Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives; Clement V. Tillion, Chairman, United States Section, International North Pacific Fisheries Commission; and to the Honorable Ted Stevens and the Honorable Frank Murkowski, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young, U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.