

# STATE OF ALASKA

## THE LEGISLATURE

1991

**Source**

CSSCR 13(RES)

**Legislative  
Resolve No.**

13



Relating to the bycatch of Alaska chinook salmon by United States and foreign trawl fisheries.

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

**WHEREAS** salmon of Alaska origin are important to the people of Alaska for subsistence, sport, and commercial fisheries; and

**WHEREAS** chinook salmon are one of the most prized and valuable species of Alaska salmon; and

**WHEREAS** chinook salmon originating in Alaska range extensively along the Alaska coast and out into the North Pacific; and

**WHEREAS** the State of Alaska has a vested interest in the conservation of chinook salmon populations originating within Alaska, and throughout western North America, due to its active involvement in numerous national and international salmon management bodies and treaties; and

**WHEREAS** new information from the National Marine Fisheries Service observer program is documenting a significant bycatch of chinook salmon in the groundfish trawl fisheries in the United States Exclusive Economic Zone off Alaska; and

**WHEREAS** the bycatch of chinook salmon threatens to affect allocation, conservation,

and management programs within the State of Alaska and confound international allocation and equity issues for these chinook fisheries which are managed under the provisions of the United States-Canada Pacific Salmon Treaty; and

**WHEREAS** new information from domestic and federal observers also strongly indicates a significant bycatch of chinook salmon in the international waters of the central Bering Sea "donut hole"; and

**WHEREAS** biological information developed by the Fisheries Research Institute of the University of Washington and accepted by the International North Pacific Fisheries Commission has determined that the chinook salmon in the Bering Sea are primarily North American in origin and from streams in Southcentral, Southeast, and Western Alaska as well as from British Columbia; and

**WHEREAS** bycatch occurs on a mixture of salmon stocks well before run strength can be assessed and thus reduces the number of fish available in inshore areas and increases the risk of overharvest; and

**WHEREAS** the documented bycatch of any chinook salmon originating in the Canadian portion of the transboundary Yukon River can adversely affect United States interests in the ongoing United States-Canada Yukon River treaty negotiations;

**BE IT RESOLVED** by the Alaska State Legislature that the Governor petition the North Pacific Fishery Management Council and the United States Secretary of Commerce to be prepared to implement emergency regulations to limit the bycatch of chinook salmon in the 1991 trawl fisheries in the United States Exclusive Economic Zone, and to expedite a 1992 chinook salmon bycatch plan amendment to the Bering Sea/Aleutian Island and Gulf of Alaska Groundfish Fishery Management Plans; and be it

**FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Governor petition the North Pacific Fishery Management Council and the United States Secretary of Commerce to implement emergency and permanent regulations limiting the bycatch of Alaska chinook salmon by domestic trawlers in the central Bering Sea "donut hole"; and be it

**FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Governor petition the United States Secretary of Commerce to identify the complete range of chinook salmon as defined in the 1990 revisions of the Magnuson Fishery Conservation and Management Act and implement a rebuttable presumption for the interception of chinook salmon beyond the United States Exclusive Economic

Zone; and be it

**FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Governor petition the United States Secretary of State, Secretary of Commerce, and Secretary of Transportation to immediately initiate international negotiations to end fishing within the "donut hole" in order to protect Alaska chinook salmon; and be it

**FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Governor request the United States Secretary of State, Secretary of Commerce, and Secretary of Transportation to authorize the United States Coast Guard to seize, under the authority of the Magnuson Fishery Conservation and Management Act as well as other treaties or bilateral agreements as might be appropriate, vessels discovered with contraband salmon on board, with such vessels to be sequestered in United States ports until disposition by the Federal Courts.

**COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable James A. Baker, III, Secretary of the U.S. Department of State; to the Honorable Robert A. Mosbacher, Sr., Secretary of the U.S. Department of Commerce; to the Honorable Samuel K. Skinner, Secretary of the U.S. Department of Transportation; 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.