

# STATE OF ALASKA THE LEGISLATURE

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Urging the media to inform the public about the quality of fresh seafood sold in the United States and urging the federal government to establish a national mandatory seafood inspection program and seafood labeling requirements.

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

**WHEREAS** the seafood industry is the largest private employer in Alaska and the second largest source of revenue for the State of Alaska; and

**WHEREAS** Alaskans deeply care about the quality of Alaska seafood products and the national and international reputation of Alaska seafood products; and

**WHEREAS** the State of Alaska has long maintained a year-round seafood inspection program to eliminate contamination and deterioration of seafood products produced in the state; and

**WHEREAS** the Alaska seafood inspection program is a model program for the rest of the nation; and

**WHEREAS** the Consumers Union of the United States, Inc., has recently published an article on the quality of fresh seafood based on samples collected in only two retail markets - Chicago and New York - that has seriously questioned the quality and

wholesomeness of fresh seafood sold in the United States; and

**WHEREAS** the article is damaging to Alaska's seafood industry because it does not distinguish between fresh or frozen salmon or farmed or wild salmon, identify the species of salmon tested, or identify the state, region, or country of origin of the salmon and other fish tested; and

**WHEREAS** the article found that 43 percent of the salmon tested contained unacceptable levels of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCB's); and

**WHEREAS** the Food and Drug Administration, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation have stated that there are no PCB problems associated with Alaska salmon; and

**WHEREAS** Alaska has the most pristine waters in the world according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, as demonstrated by water quality sampling at strategic sites across Alaska; and

**WHEREAS** American per capita consumption of fish has increased nearly 25 percent over the past decade; and

**WHEREAS** federal inspection programs have long existed for meat and poultry but not for seafood;

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature encourages the media to educate and inform the American public about the quality of all fresh seafood sold in the United States; and be it

**FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully requests the Congress to establish

(1) a national mandatory seafood inspection program to ensure that consumers nationwide receive the highest quality seafood products possible; and

(2) labeling requirements for seafood products that include disclosure of the country or state of origin of the seafood in the product and whether the seafood in the product is farmed or wild.

**COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable George Bush, President of the United States; the Honorable Dan Quayle, Vice-President of the United States and President of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Robert C. Byrd, President Pro Tempore of the

U.S. Senate; the Honorable Thomas S. Foley, Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives; the Honorable Edward R. Madigan, Secretary of the U.S. Department of Agriculture; the Honorable David A. Kessler, Commissioner, Food and Drug Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; Rhonda H. Karpatkin, Executive Director, Consumers Union of the United States, Inc.; 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.