

STATE OF ALASKA
THE LEGISLATURE

1996

Source
HJR 62

Legislative
Resolve No.
44



Requesting the federal government to purchase surplus 1995 Alaska canned pink salmon.

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

WHEREAS a surplus of more than 1,700,000 cases of 1995 Alaska canned pink salmon is predicted to be present in warehouses on June 30, 1996; and

WHEREAS six major seafood companies in Alaska, including Tyson Seafoods, have advised fishermen that, because of the huge overstock of 1995 canned pink salmon, they will not purchase pink salmon in 1996; and

WHEREAS the lack of markets for pink salmon poses a threat of economic disaster to the majority of Alaska fishermen and their families; and

WHEREAS the lack of markets for Alaska salmon will especially hurt fishermen in rural areas of the state, particularly Alaska Natives, who will not be able to engage in commercial fishing that is often their only source of cash income; and

WHEREAS the Alaska commercial salmon industry supports more than 39,000 employees and more than 12,000 licensed fishermen and is the largest private employer in Alaska; and

WHEREAS canned pink salmon is a valuable, healthy, and wholesome source of high quality protein, vitamins, and minerals that is widely needed throughout the country and world;

and

WHEREAS the United States Department of Agriculture operates surplus removal programs to purchase surplus commodities for school lunch programs, export programs, assistance to low income persons, and the federal prison system; and

WHEREAS the United States Department of Agriculture requires salmon products purchased by the department to have been packed under a National Marine Fisheries Service "Type 1" inspection program that was not in place in Alaska during 1995; and

WHEREAS pink salmon canned in Alaska during 1995 was subject to strict safety and sanitation standards and to a state of the art hazard analysis/critical control point sanitation program developed by the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation; and

WHEREAS an inspection of 1995 Alaska canned pink salmon by the National Marine Fisheries Service, Inspection Services Division, would demonstrate that the safety and sanitation standards for canned pink salmon in 1995 in Alaska easily equal the safety standards under a "Type 1" inspection program; and

WHEREAS significant areas of the 34,000 miles of the pristine coastline of Alaska may be polluted by large numbers of unharvested pink salmon that will return to spawn and die in Alaska's streams and rivers and then decompose and contaminate coastal and marine environments; and

WHEREAS the lack of markets for Alaska pink salmon will erode the tax base of the State of Alaska and municipalities that rely on taxes on the sale and purchase of fish to support government operations;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully requests that the United States Department of Agriculture waive the requirement for "Type 1" inspection of canned pink salmon purchased under the surplus removal programs managed by the Agricultural Marketing Service and that the United States Department of Agriculture purchase surplus stocks of 1995 Alaska canned pink salmon.

COPIES of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Bill Clinton, President of the United States; the Honorable Daniel R. Glickman, Secretary, United States Department of Agriculture; the Honorable Lon S. Hatamiya, Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service, United States Department of Agriculture; the Honorable William E. Ludwig, Administrator, Food and Consumer Service, United States Department of Agriculture; 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.