



MEMBERSHIP RESOLUTION FY17-02

A RESOLUTION BY THE SOUTHWEST ALASKA MUNICIPAL CONFERENCE (SWAMC) MEMBERSHIP REQUESTING THE ALASKA LEGISLATURE AND GOVERNOR WALKER NOT TO IMPOSE ANY MORE CUTS TO THE ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH & GAME (ADF&G) BUDGET AND PARTICULARLY TO THE DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES BUDGET AND THAT ANY TAX REVENUE GENERATED FROM NEW OR INCREASED STATE TAXES ON THE COMMERCIAL SEAFOOD INDUSTRY BE USED TO FILL THE FUNDING GAP FOR ADF&G AND PAY FOR CONTINUING EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF ALASKA'S COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

WHEREAS, subsistence, sport and commercial harvests of Alaska's fish and game resources are vital to the social, cultural and economic health of the State of Alaska; and

WHEREAS, the Alaska seafood industry is the second largest contributor to Alaska's economy; and

WHEREAS, the Alaska seafood industry directly provides over 60,000 direct jobs and thousands more indirectly, making it the largest private-sector employer in the State; and

WHEREAS, Alaska's commercial seafood industry directly pays over \$250 million annually in taxes and fees which exceeds current State commercial fisheries management spending; and

WHEREAS, Alaska's seafood industry pays business and landing taxes that directly benefit over 65 communities and boroughs in Alaska and reduces community dependence on State funds; and

WHEREAS, the seafood industry relies on strong State commercial fishery research and management programs in order to provide that economic benefit; and

WHEREAS, the Commercial Fisheries Division budget has been reduced by more than 20% in the past two years, from \$50 million to \$40 million, which includes offsets from CFEC funding and the unrestricted general fund has been reduced by 30%; and

WHEREAS, ADF&G is preparing for additional budget cuts of 10-14% in FY18 which could result in another \$5.7 million reduction to the Division of Commercial Fisheries; and

WHEREAS, when the Division of Commercial Fisheries budget is reduced, the seafood industry loses research and resource management programs that are necessary to allow for harvest opportunity; and

WHEREAS, impacts of these budget cuts are already apparent in the recently released Togiak herring fishery 2017 harvest forecast and harvest limits where inadequate funding precluded sampling necessary for scientific modeling used to set harvest limits, resulting in reliance on historical average catch and a 20% harvest reduction for an uncertainty buffer; and

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WHEREAS, reduced harvest opportunities in any fishery result in fewer jobs, less income and decreased tax revenue for the State of Alaska and coastal communities; and

WHEREAS, Governor Walker's previous fiscal plan included raising taxes on the fishing industry, up to 33% in some areas, and the future fiscal plan is as yet, unknown.

NOW BE IT RESOLVED that the Southwest Alaska Municipal Conference Membership strongly requests the Alaska Legislature and Governor Walker to not impose any more cuts to the ADF&G budget and particularly to the Division of Commercial Fisheries budget.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that any tax revenue generated from new or increased State taxes on the commercial seafood industry be used to fill the funding gap for ADF&G and pay for continuing effective management of Alaska's commercial fisheries.

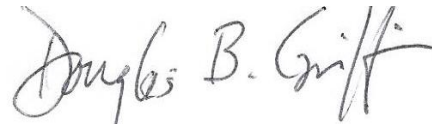
PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Southwest Alaska Municipal Conference Membership this 3rd day of March, 2017.

IN WITNESS THERETO:

ATTEST:



Rebecca Skinner, SWAMC President



Doug Griffin, SWAMC Executive Director