

Legislature Passes Resolution Regarding Fish Farming in Federal Waters

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(JUNEAU) - The Alaska State Legislature unanimously passed the Committee Substitute for HJR 15, a resolution that states the Alaskan Legislature's opposition to Open Ocean Aquaculture (OOA) in federal waters.

The resolution reaffirms the Legislature's commitment to ensuring the biological and economic health of Alaska's fisheries, as well as the social and economic well-being of our state's communities. Further, it requests that Congress require any federal proposal to authorize Open Ocean Aquaculture to undergo a legislative environmental impact statement and asks that Congress ban the introduction of genetically modified fish to the Exclusive Economic Zone.

House Special Committee on Fisheries Co-Chair Bill Thomas (R-Haines) said of the resolution, "Today, we sent a clear message to those in Washington who are pushing the idea of aquaculture in federal waters. The global fish farming industry is bad news for Alaska and for fishermen nationwide. In Alaska, we produce seafood the way it should be done, and we will fight for the well-being of our industry and our communities."

"It would be irresponsible for us to ignore the economic, social, and environmental concerns that caused us to ban finfish farming in state waters in 1990," said Fisheries Co-Chair Gabrielle LeDoux (R-Kodiak). "Open Ocean Aquaculture goes even further and could create even greater dangers to our fisheries."

HJR 15 also requests that Regional Fisheries Management Councils be granted authority over any proposals regarding OOA.

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