

Debra Thompson

From: Stephen Giesbrecht
Sent: Friday, March 8, 2024 10:27 AM
To: Assembly; Glorianne Wollen; Liz Cabrera
Subject: FW: Joint Legislative Seafood Industry Task Force
Attachments: AML Input on SCR10.pdf

From: Adam Kane <adam@akml.org>
Sent: Friday, March 8, 2024 10:21 AM
Cc: Nils Andreassen <nils@akml.org>
Subject: Joint Legislative Seafood Industry Task Force

Dear AML Coastal Community Members,

The Legislature is currently examining and seeking solutions to the serious issues facing Alaska's seafood industry. AML knows the value the sector brings to job opportunities, community revenues, and sustainability of your communities. We would like to hear your input on the proposed [SCR10](#) effort to create a Joint Legislative Seafood Industry Task Force. Please have a look at the attached input AML has developed, and consider sharing your position as well, to ensure that all of our most affected communities have their voices heard in this process.

Please reach out if you have any questions or would like to talk more about this.

Thanks,
Adam

Adam Kane

Alaska Municipal League

(907) 586-1325

"Strengthening Alaska Municipalities"





ONE SEALASKA PLAZA, SUITE 200 • JUNEAU, ALASKA 99801
TEL (907) 586-1325 • FAX (907) 463-5480 • WWW.AKML.ORG

Member of the National League of Cities and the National Association of Counties

March 6, 2024

The Alaska Municipal League (AML) applauds and supports efforts of the Legislature to examine and seek solutions to the serious issues facing Alaska's seafood industry. AML knows the value the sector brings to job opportunities, community revenues, and sustainability of coastal communities.

AML supports SCR 10, recently introduced by the Senate, and would suggest an important additional step that would strengthen this bill and overall effort. AML recommends the inclusion of a municipal representative from a coastal, fisheries-interdependent community. This perspective will be critical to mobilizing input from local governments whose activities are actively contributing to the sector's health.

The roles and responsibilities of local governments align with the mission of the task force to "address those elements of the crisis in the state seafood industry that can be solved through governmental policy and action on the part of the industry," and its duties recommending (1) legislative and administrative means by which government can assist the state's seafood industry in response to changing economics; and (2) public policy options that account for effects on communities that are severely affected by the crisis in the state's seafood industry."

Directly or indirectly, local governments depend on revenue from the seafood industries to fund their operations. In turn, local governments are strong advocates for their local fishermen and those working in related industries. Local governments develop and maintain the infrastructure necessary for the operation of their local fisheries. When there is a problem in a particular part of the industry, participants in the seafood economy usually turn first to their local elected officials, who are in the best position to understand local needs and to work collaboratively with industry to keep operations functioning and improving. Local government officials in Alaska regularly communicate with their counterparts in other communities across the state to share information and ideas, keep abreast of developments in the industry, and see how their neighbors deal with issues similar to their own.

Local governments are well-suited to provide input on how governments can assist the seafood industry than the elected officials of governments that for many years have already been effectively assisting and collaborating with the industry. AML recognizes the value of practical experience in getting a job done. The current proposal would include the important participation of industry leaders, who are best qualified to articulate industry needs. But it is local government leaders who have the experience of responding to industry needs as they arise and developing workable solutions in the public arena. This experience is essential to the mission of the Task Force.

We recognize concerns about excessively expanding the size of the board and acknowledge that smaller groups can be nimbler and more effective in many situations. However, broader participation brings a greater variety of ideas and views from diverse backgrounds. Including local government officials can lead to local solutions to industry problems. Involving local government officials in the process would help identify and resolve local problems and challenges that might otherwise go undetected, resulting in more effective and efficient solutions from the new board.

The benefits of including a local official far outweigh any possible negative results from a slightly larger organization. We urge the Legislature to advance SCR 10, with the inclusion of an elected local official.

Sincerely,

Nils Andreassen
Executive Director