

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 26

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY REPRESENTATIVES VANCE, McCabe, Rauscher

Introduced: 2/20/24

Referred: House Special Committee on Fisheries, Resources

A RESOLUTION

1 **Urging the expansion of state jurisdiction over coastal water.**

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

3 **WHEREAS** the state, guided by its constitution, is committed to promoting the
4 settlement of land and the development of resources in alignment with public interest; and

5 **WHEREAS** art. VIII, sec. 1, Constitution of the State of Alaska, declares the state's
6 policy to encourage land settlement and resource development in the public interest; and

7 **WHEREAS** art. VIII, sec. 2, Constitution of the State of Alaska, mandates the
8 legislature to provide for the use, development, and conservation of all natural resources,
9 including land and water, for the maximum benefit of its people; and

10 **WHEREAS** art. VIII, sec. 3, Constitution of the State of Alaska, emphasizes the
11 preservation of fish, wildlife, and water in their natural state for common use by the people;
12 and

13 **WHEREAS** art. VIII, sec. 4, Constitution of the State of Alaska, underscores the use,
14 development, and maintenance of replenishable resources on the sustained yield principle;
15 and

16 **WHEREAS** art. VIII, sec. 5, Constitution of the State of Alaska, empowers the

1 legislature to provide facilities and services for greater use, development, reclamation, and
2 settlement of land, and for fisheries, wildlife, and water; and

3 **WHEREAS** the resilient people of the state are willing and able to safeguard the
4 coastline; and

5 **WHEREAS** the coastal water of the state is deeply ingrained in the state's culture and
6 identity; and

7 **WHEREAS** the people of the state believe that local management of resources is
8 better than from well-meaning experts in a distant capitol; and

9 **WHEREAS** fishing is a cornerstone of the state's economy, serving as the largest
10 private-sector employer; and

11 **WHEREAS** the state is a global leader and sets the gold standard for fisheries
12 management; and

13 **WHEREAS** the fishing families of the state, who pass down responsible practices
14 through generations, are the heart and soul of the seafood industry; and

15 **WHEREAS** the state is the leading seafood producer in the United States,
16 contributing two-thirds of the nation's wild seafood harvest; and

17 **WHEREAS** the seafood industry directly employs over 62,000 workers, with more
18 than 27,000 being state residents, surpassing any other private sector industry in the state; and

19 **WHEREAS** the seafood industry generated over \$163,000,000 in revenue for state
20 and local governments; and

21 **WHEREAS** the seafood industry annually ships approximately 1,000,000,000 pounds
22 of finished product southbound; and

23 **WHEREAS** the seafood industry contributed \$15,000,000,000 in economic output
24 and nearly 100,000 jobs nationally; and

25 **WHEREAS** the present three nautical mile limit for fisheries management jurisdiction
26 limits the state's ability to adequately protect and manage seafood resources as outlined in the
27 constitution; and

28 **WHEREAS** a 15 nautical mile limit would enhance management, enforcement, and
29 jurisdiction control, ensuring the protection of resources and the maximization of returns for
30 the state's commercially harvested seafood;

31 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature urges the National Oceanic

1 Atmospheric Administration Fisheries to extend the fisheries management jurisdiction from
2 the existing three nautical mile limit to a 15 nautical mile limit; and be it

3 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature calls on the state
4 government to collaborate with the Alaska Congressional delegation to facilitate the
5 expansion of jurisdiction over coastal water.

6 **COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Joseph R. Biden, President
7 of the United States; and the Honorable Kamala D. Harris, Vice President of the United States
8 and President of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Gina Raimondo, United States Secretary of
9 Commerce; the Honorable Richard W. Spinrad, Ph.D., United States Under Secretary of
10 Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere and National Oceanic and Atmospheric
11 Administration Administrator; Janet Coit, Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, National
12 Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; the Honorable Doug Vincent-Lang, Commissioner,
13 Department of Fish and Game; and the Honorable Lisa Murkowski and the Honorable Dan
14 Sullivan, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Mary Peltola, U.S. Representative, members of
15 the Alaska delegation in Congress.