

**STATE OF ALASKA
THE LEGISLATURE**

2024

Source

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**Legislative
Resolve No.**

33



Establishing the Joint Legislative Task Force Evaluating Alaska's Seafood Industry.

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

WHEREAS the seafood industry is one of the cornerstones of the state's economy, supporting tens of thousands of jobs, and seafood has a multi-billion dollar economic impact in the state; and

WHEREAS increased operational costs in the state, high interest rates, and considerable changes in the global seafood market in recent years have placed the state's seafood industry in economic peril, threatening not only the main engine of the rural economies of the state but also a significant contributor to urban economies, and is causing harmful revenue losses to the state's general fund and to municipal budgets; and

WHEREAS decreased consumer demand has resulted in the volume of United States seafood retail sales falling below benchmarks established before the COVID-19 pandemic, reversing substantial gains earned in 2020, 2021, and 2022; and

WHEREAS, in 2023, global harvest, including the state's harvest and competing Russian harvest, increased supply for many key state seafood products; and

WHEREAS preliminary data show that prices paid to both fishermen and processors

in calendar year 2023 were historically low for many key state seafood species; and

WHEREAS state seafood harvesters are in danger of being without markets and being forced into economic distress; and

WHEREAS numerous seafood processing facilities are for sale, closing, or planning to shut down for a portion or all of the 2024 fishing season; and

WHEREAS seafood is a renewable resource that is becoming increasingly unique in the global market and can provide immeasurable economic benefit to this state in perpetuity;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature establishes the Joint Legislative Task Force Evaluating Alaska's Seafood Industry to address those elements of the economic crisis in the state's seafood industry that can be solved through governmental policy and action on the part of the industry; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall develop a long-term vision for the state seafood industry as a critical element of the state's economic future; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that the duties of the task force include evaluating public policy options for the state that address

(1) means by which government can assist the state's seafood industry in response to changing economics;

(2) effects on communities that are severely affected by the economic crisis in the state's seafood industry;

(3) ways to improve the coordination of the harvesting, processing, and marketing of seafood;

(4) ways to incentivize new seafood product development;

(5) ways to improve the marketing efforts of the state seafood industry;

(6) ways to improve the quality of the state's seafood products;

(7) a long-term strategic plan for the state's seafood industry; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that the members of the task force shall conduct the business of the task force with a statewide vision of the economic crisis in the state's seafood industry and the need to find solutions to the economic crisis; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall be composed of eight members, appointed as follows:

(1) the president of the senate, serving as chair;

(2) three additional members from the senate appointed by the president of the senate; and

(3) four members of the house of representatives appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that the members of the task force shall be appointed to objectively evaluate and support the statewide seafood industry as a whole and not just a particular region or harvesting sector of the industry; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that a vacancy on the task force shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that staff of the president of the senate and of the legislative affairs agency may provide administrative and other support to the task force; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall meet at the call of the chair; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that a majority of the task force constitutes a quorum; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that the members of the legislature serving on the task force are entitled to per diem and travel expenses; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that members of the task force shall meet virtually or use other electronic means to reduce task force expenses to the fullest extent practicable; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall submit a report of its findings and recommendations to the legislature by January 21, 2025, and may make any interim reports it considers advisable; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force is terminated at 11:59 p.m. on February 1, 2025.