



RESOLUTION 23-51

A RESOLUTION OF THE ALEUTIANS EAST BOROUGH ASSEMBLY OPPOSING SENATE BILL 128 AND HOUSE BILL 180

WHEREAS, the Aleutians East Borough and our communities are encompassed by the Alaska Department of Fish & Game Salmon Management Area M of the Alaska Peninsula and Aleutian Islands, and

WHEREAS, commercial salmon fishing and processing has been a mainstay of this region for over one hundred years and the Aleut people have been sustained by the salmon for millennia, and

WHEREAS, the Alaska Board of Fisheries met in February 2023 to address Alaska Peninsula/Aleutian Islands/Chignik finfish, including concerns over struggling Yukon and Kuskokwim chum salmon stocks, and

WHEREAS, the inclusive Board of Fisheries public process for the February meeting yielded over six hundred pages of written comment submitted and nearly three hundred testifying members of the public, and

WHEREAS, the Board of Fisheries also heard irrefutable scientific evidence from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and others that the main causes of Yukon salmon struggles are conditions related to climate change, not Area M salmon fisheries, and

WHEREAS, only one in five chum salmon harvested in the Area M mixed stock salmon fishery is headed to the Yukon/Kuskokwim region, and

WHEREAS, the Area M Seiners proactively enacted a plan of action in 2022 resulting in the lowest ratio of chum to sockeye salmon since the 1970s, with plans to continue and improve the chum conservation plan in 2023, and

WHEREAS, at the February meeting the Board of Fisheries adopted significant restrictions on the South Alaska Peninsula June fishery in Area M, including cuts to fishing time, closure of the Sanak Island Section and triggers to further reduce or close the fishery if chum thresholds are exceeded, and

WHEREAS, Senate Bill 128 to close the Area M commercial salmon fishery for June 2023 was introduced on April 12th, 2023 and companion bill House Bill 180 was introduced April 26th, and

WHEREAS, Senate Bill 128 received a hearing in the Senate Judiciary Committee of the Alaska Senate on April 21, 2023, and

WHEREAS, Senate Bill 128 and House Bill 180 setup a bad precedent of the Legislature attempting to overrule the Board of Fisheries, even before the new regulations have had a chance to be implemented, and

WHEREAS, Senate Bill 128 and House bill 180, if adopted would cause significant economic harm to the Aleutians East Borough, our fishermen and communities, and the State of Alaska.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Aleutians East Borough Assembly opposes Senate Bill 128 and House Bill 180 that would close the 2023 June salmon fishery in Area M, as these bills are unwarranted and have the potential to cause significant harm to the Aleutians East Borough and the State of Alaska, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Aleutians East Borough Assembly urges the Governor and Legislature of the State of Alaska to reject Senate Bill 128 and House Bill 180, and to support the Board of Fisheries process.

Approved and Adopted this 3rd day of May 2023.



Alvin D. Osterback, Mayor



Beverly Rosete, Clerk