



Resolution 18-02

Resolution of Support for U.S. Senate Bill #1323 - the Young Fishermen's Development Act of 2017

WHEREAS, the “graying” of Alaska’s commercial fishing fleet is a known issue for the state potentially jeopardizing the future of this essential industry; and

WHEREAS, Alaska produces more than 50% of seafood harvested in the U.S.; and

WHEREAS, commercial fishing and seafood processing in Alaska is one of the most important statewide and local economic industries which supports over sixty thousand (direct and indirect) jobs; and

WHEREAS, Alaska commercial fishing provides critical local food security, and significantly contributes to the global food supply, including U.S. exports; and

WHEREAS, Americans import 80% of the seafood they consume,

WHEREAS, entrance into the commercial fishing industry as a young person can be challenging, because the initial investment and knowledge required for start-up can be prohibitive; and

WHEREAS, various forms of fishery permitting and limited entry have significantly increased the capital cost of entry into fishing; and

WHEREAS, acquiring the diverse skill set associated with commercial fishing, including navigation, seamanship, mechanical/engine repair, electronics, net mending, gear work, biology, environmental sustainability, product care, , primary processing value added processing, safety, and employee and financial management can be very difficult to acquire; and

WHEREAS, development programs to assist young fishermen are extremely important for maintaining the integrity and competitiveness of Alaska and national commercial fishing fleets; and

WHEREAS, this Act provides essential federal funding that will leverage the knowledge, programs and resources available from Tribal and Alaska Native organizations, statewide educational institutions and trade organizations; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SOUTHEAST CONFERENCE THAT:

- 1) The Southeast Conference support U.S. Senate Bill 1323, the Young Fishermen's Development Act of 2017.
- 2) The Southeast Conference thanks Senators Sullivan, Murkowski, Markey and Cantwell for their vision and support for this vital industry.
- 3) This resolution takes effect immediately upon passage and shall become one of the Southeast Conference's federal legislative priorities.

Adopted by the Southeast Conference on December 21st, 2017.

Witness by:



Jan Hill
President

Attest:



Robert Venables
Executive Director