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SOUTHEAST ALASKA REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION

Senator Gary Stevens
State Capitol, Room 429
Juneau, Alaska 99801
Senator.Gary.Stevens@akleg.gov

RE: Support for SB89 – Shellfish Enhancement

March 30, 2017

Dear Senator Stevens,

Southeast Conference would like to express complete support for SB89. Our Board of Directors and members recognize that SB89 is part of a larger effort to develop mariculture in Alaska.

Using a consensus process our organization developed the Southeast Alaska 2020 Economic Development Plan and in that plan one of the top priorities is to grow a \$1billion mariculture industry in 30 years. We agree with the Governor and the Mariculture Task Force that a developed mariculture industry will have positive economic, environmental, cultural, and manufacturing value, as well as food security benefits to Alaskans. Southeast Conference is a non-profit organization with members from large and small cities, villages, tribal organizations and corporations, individuals, as well as some state and federal agencies. Our mission is to undertake and support activities that promote strong economies, healthy communities, and a quality environment in Southeast Alaska.

We support the Mariculture Task Force in its effort to provide recommendations for a comprehensive plan to develop a viable and sustainable mariculture industry producing shellfish and aquatic plants for the long-term benefit of Alaska's economy, environment, and communities.

SB 89 plays an important role in the development of mariculture in Alaska. SB89 creates a regulatory framework with which ADF&G can allow for and manage shellfish fishery enhancement, restoration and hatcheries. This would allow interested stakeholders to either continue or begin enhancement and/or restoration of species such as King crab, sea cucumber, geoduck, abalone, razor clams, or others. This framework (SB 89) is absolutely necessary to continue moving forward with the development of mariculture related to wild shellfish enhancement.

Thank you for sponsoring this important legislation. Southeast Conference supports SB89 and appreciates your proactive role in introducing the legislation. If there are any questions, you may contact our office.

On Behalf of our Board of Directors and Members
Sincerely,

Shelly Wright
Executive Director

Cc:

Senator Mia Costello, Chair, Senate Labor and Committee: Senator.Mia.Costello@akleg.gov
Tim Lamkin, Staff, Senator Gary Stevens: Tim.Lamkin@akleg.gov