

# ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE



REPRESENTATIVE GERAN TARR

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August 5, 2013

Members of ASMI Customer Advisory Panel:

We would like to begin by thanking you for your service to ASMI. Alaska's fishing industry has long been vital to the economic and nutritional wellbeing of every Alaskan, and your service with ASMI helps support the critical role they play in support of the industry.

We are writing you today in response to a recent announcement by Walmart that they would only source wild caught seafood certified by the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC). This decision has the potential to greatly reduce Alaska seafood as a source for their customers. While follow up announcements have indicated a willingness to reevaluate their policy, we find this extremely troubling as Alaska has been at the forefront of managing a sustainable fishing industry for over 125 years. The industry is not opposed to meeting a rigorous certification standard for sustainability, but finds the MSC certification flawed. The announcement to drop MSC certification in favor of using the FAO based RFM standards, with independent certification from Global Trust, ensures buyers that Alaskans are still the great stewards of their resources they have always been, long before the sustainability movement began. Our use of this certification is a reflection of our willingness and dedication to the long-term health of our fisheries.

Although not without growing pains and challenges, throughout this discussion, the companies represented by the CAP did not back away from sourcing Alaska seafood. We believe this is because you trust our management practices and know our commitment to sustainable fishery management is unwavering. By continuing to source Alaska seafood, you are helping us to further demonstrate to consumers that Alaska seafood is a superior product.

As policy makers, we will continue to work with our Department of Fish and Game, the Alaska Board of Fisheries, the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council, and ASMI to evolve to the new certification system. We look forward to working with you to continue to provide wild Alaska seafood to markets worldwide.

Sincerely,

A blue ink signature of Geran Tarr.

Representative Geran Tarr

A blue ink signature of Senator Peter Micciche.

Senator Peter Micciche

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