

# Alaska State Legislature

Representative Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins  
Representative Sara Hannan



Representative Dan Ortiz  
Representative Andi Story

April 2, 2021

North Pacific Fishery Management Council  
1007 West Third, Suite 400  
Anchorage, AK 99501

Re: Agenda Item C2 – BSAI Halibut Abundance Based Management

Dear Chairman Kineen and Members of the Council,

We represent the halibut users of Southeast Alaska. When coastal communities thrive, the State of Alaska thrives. Vital to coastal communities are sustaining working waterfronts and healthy fisheries. A healthy, sustainable halibut harvest is vital to the future of our coastal communities and our constituents.

Agenda Item C2 directly impacts the communities we serve. Since 2015, directed halibut harvesters have worked within the North Pacific Council process to identify alternatives and analyses to mitigate the risks that static Prohibited Species Catch limits in the Bering Sea present in times of low halibut abundance.

In November 2019, ADF&G Commissioner Doug Vincent-Lang identified Alaska's priorities in *Alaska Fish and Wildlife News*, emphasizing the need to explore more tailored management options. Presently, halibut bycatch quotas are fixed; they do not change as abundance changes. Thus, when halibut abundance declines, halibut bycatch amounts to a larger portion — and in our opinion, an unsustainable and inappropriate portion — of total halibut catch. Abundance-based management of halibut bycatch would ensure that allocations are more fair and equitable.

In light of the need to support Alaskans and support our fishing communities, we support Commissioner Vincent-Lang and believe that all user groups should see their quotas rise and fall with abundance. We urge the North Pacific Council to take action to adopt a management alternative that will ensure sustained participation of our fishing communities in years to come.

Sincerely,



Representative Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins



Representative Dan Ortiz



Representative Sara Hannan



Representative Andi Story

CC: Governor Mike Dunleavy  
John Moller, Policy Advisor, Office of the Governor  
David Witherell, Executive Director, NPFMC  
Doug Vincent-Lang, Commissioner, Department of Fish and Game  
Benjamin Mulligan, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Fish and Game