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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6025

RECEIVED

DEC 29 1992

December 21, 1992

Richard B. Lauber
Chairman
North Pacific Fishery Management Council
P.O. Box 103136
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Dear Rick:


I remain concerned about the potential impacts on fishermen of the Council's proposed Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) management plan for sablefish and halibut. Fishermen who do not own vessels or who only receive a very small IFQ under the plan will be particularly hard hit if the Council's proposal is approved by the Secretary.

In light of this, I would like to urge the Council to consider further modifications to the proposed IFQ plan, such as the Sitka Block proposal and the 1,000 pound minimum allocation, which would increase the chance that small boat fishermen and fishermen who do not receive an initial allocation may continue to participate in these fisheries. Should the Secretary approve the proposed IFQ plan, quick action by the Council at the January meeting could allow these two amendments to be incorporated into the IFQ plan prior to its proposed implementation for the 1994 fishing season.

While the inclusion of these two amendments will not resolve all of the outstanding concerns that I have with the Council's IFQ proposal, it would help to alleviate some of the major inequities found in the present plan.


With best wishes,

Cordially,


TED STEVENS

MEMORANDUM

TO: Council, SSC and AP Members

FROM: Clarence G. Pautzke
Executive Director 

DATE: June 17, 1993

SUBJECT: Sablefish and Halibut IFQ Program

ESTIMATED TIME

4.0 HOURS

ACTION REQUIRED

- (a) Implementation schedule update.
- (b) Initial review of Block Proposals and 1,000 lb. minimum EA/RIR/IRFAs, and decide whether or not to forward them to the public for review and further consideration.

BACKGROUND

(a) Implementation Schedule Update

The final rule implementing Amendment 15 to the Fishery Management Plan for the Groundfish Fishery of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands, Amendment 20 to the Gulf of Alaska Groundfish FMP, and a Pacific Halibut Regulatory Amendment, is in the final stages of internal review at NMFS and NOAA. It is anticipated that the rule will be transmitted by the end of June. If the Secretary of Commerce signs the final rule it will be submitted to the Office of the Federal Register for publication. Once published in the *Federal Register*, there is a 30-day APA delayed effectiveness (cooling off) period. After the cooling off period, barring court ordered injunctions, the rule will become effective.

Fishing under the sablefish and halibut IFQ program is still anticipated to begin in 1995. Using program development grant monies, NMFS is currently developing databases and application forms. Other funding for implementation will not be forthcoming until the rule becomes effective.

(b) Initial review of Block Proposals and 1,000 lb. minimum.

At the January 1993 meeting the Council asked that an EA/RIR/IRFA be developed for the "Sitka Block" and the "Full/Partial Block" amendments to the sablefish and halibut IFQ program which are imbedded in the FMPs for groundfish in the BS/AI and the GOA, and the Halibut Regulations. Additionally the Council requested that an EA/RIR/IRFA be developed for the "1,000 Pound Minimum IFQ" proposed amendment to the Halibut Regulations. Economists with the Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission were requested to develop the analysis, which members of the Council family received last week.

Analysts from the CFEC are on hand at this meeting to present their analyses, and discuss the different proposals. If the Council chooses to forward the analysis to the public for review, then a final decision on the proposed amendments could be taken at their September 1993 meeting. Item C-2(a) is a resolution passed by the Alaska State Legislature regarding IFQ block proposals.

STATE OF ALASKA
THE LEGISLATURE

1993

Source
HJR 41

Legislative
Resolve No.
14



Relating to consideration of individual fishery quota shares block proposals by the North Pacific Fishery Management Council.

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

WHEREAS the North Pacific Fishery Management Council has recently approved an individual fishery quota (IFQ) share program for the North Pacific and Bering Sea halibut and sablefish fisheries; and

WHEREAS the IFQ program for the halibut and sablefish fisheries is intended to provide long-term sustainable harvests of these resources; and

WHEREAS Alaska coastal communities depend on the ability to harvest marine resources and must be beneficiaries of the IFQ program; and

WHEREAS residents of Alaska have expressed concern that the IFQ program approved by the North Pacific Fishery Management Council allows consolidation of IFQ shares and may reduce the size of the fishing fleet which could in turn reduce the benefits of the IFQ program to Alaska fishermen, Alaska coastal communities, and the state as a whole; and

WHEREAS the North Pacific Fishery Management Council has a responsibility to

respond to the concerns that have arisen regarding consolidation of IFQ shares; and

WHEREAS several proposals regarding transfers of blocks of IFQ shares have been developed and are before the North Pacific Fishery Management Council for its consideration; and

WHEREAS these block proposals would limit the amount of consolidation that could occur under the IFQ program, and thereby help to maintain the present diversity of the longline fishing fleet, to provide an entry level fishery, and to ensure that the benefits of the IFQ program accrue to Alaska fishermen, processors, and coastal communities;

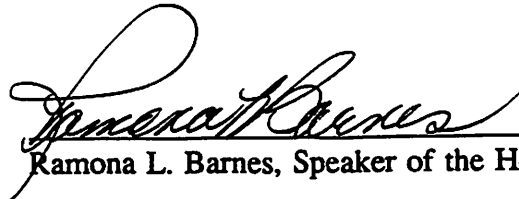
BE IT RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully urges the North Pacific Fishery Management Council to address the concerns expressed by Alaska residents regarding consolidation of IFQ shares by amending the IFQ program for the halibut and sablefish fisheries to include a block proposal system.

COPIES of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Bill Clinton, President of the United States; the Honorable Ronald H. Brown, Secretary of the U.S. Department of Commerce; the Honorable Leon E. Pannetta, Director of the Office of Management and Budget; the Honorable Diana Josephson, Acting Administrator, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce; the Honorable Nancy Foster, Acting Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce; the Honorable Richard Lauber, Chair of the North Pacific Fishery Management Council; and to the Honorable Ted Stevens and the Honorable Frank Murkowski, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young, U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.

AUTHENTICATION

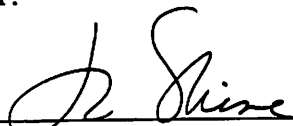
The following officers of the Legislature certify that the attached enrolled resolution, HJR 41, consisting of 2 pages, was passed in conformity with the requirements of the constitution and laws of the State of Alaska and the Uniform Rules of the Legislature.

Passed by the House April 21, 1993



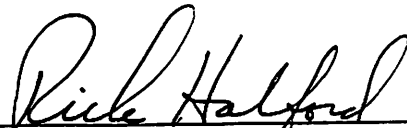
Ramona L. Barnes, Speaker of the House

ATTEST:




J.C. Shine, Chief Clerk of the House

Passed by the Senate April 27, 1993



Rick Halford, President of the Senate

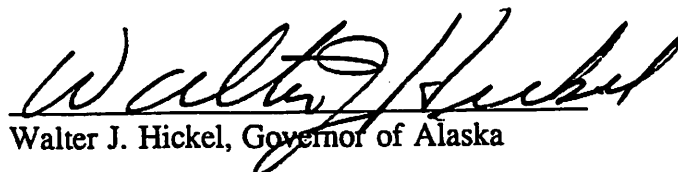
ATTEST:



Nancy Quinto, Secretary of the Senate

ACTION BY GOVERNOR

Approved by the Governor 5-7 19 93



Walter J. Hickel, Governor of Alaska