



Alaska State Legislature

North Pacific Fisheries Management Council
1007 West Third, Suite 400
Anchorage, AK 99501-2252

RE: Agenda Item C2 – BSAI Halibut Abundance Based Management

Dear Chairman Kineen and Members of the Council,

April 1st, 2021

We represent the halibut users in house districts across Alaska. Our state is economically dependent on the strength of its working waterfront, and sustaining a healthy fishery is vital to our social and cultural fabric. Halibut harvest is a key component both commercially and recreationally in that system. Agenda Item C2 concerns the wellbeing of the communities we serve. The directed halibut harvesters have worked within the council process since 2015 to identify alternatives and analyses to remedy the risks that static Prohibited Species Catch limits in the Bering Sea present to the fishery in times of low halibut abundance.

In November 2019, ADF&G Commissioner Doug Vincent-Lang laid out Alaska's priorities in Alaska Fish and Wildlife News. He said, "Finally, we plan to explore options for abundance-based management options for bycatch of halibut in Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands groundfish fisheries. The allocation to directed halibut fisheries floats with abundance, where at lower abundance levels allocations are lower and at higher abundance levels allocations are higher. Halibut bycatch quotas, however, are fixed and become a larger portion of total halibut catch when abundance declines. We need to explore if there are options to float the bycatch quotas with overall abundance. We understand the complexities associated with this, but need to assess the options available."

We agree that all user groups should see their quotas rise and fall with stock abundance to ensure allocations are fair and equitable to all such fishermen, and ensure that all quotas are based upon the same science-based principles of abundance and harvest. It is important to preserve the opportunities for the directed fisheries to ensure the sustained participation of our fishing communities. As members of the Alaska House of Representatives, we support Commissioner Vincent-Lang's above statements and urge the council to take decisive action to adopt an alternative that will accomplish these goals.

Respectfully,

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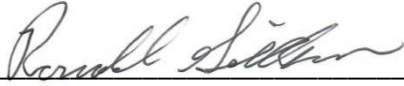
Representative Sarah Vance
District 31

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Representative Ben Carpenter
District 29



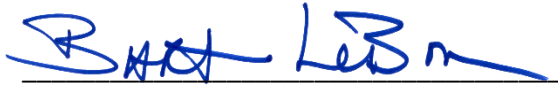
Representative Mike Cronk
District 6



Representative Ron Gillham
District 30



Representative James Kaufman
District 28



Representative Bart LeBon
District 1



Representative Ken McCarty
District 13



Representative David Nelson
District 15



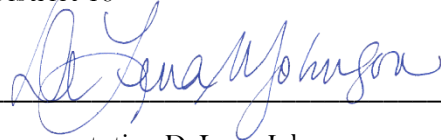
Representative George Rauscher
District 9



Representative Steve Thompson
District 2



Representative David Eastman
District 10



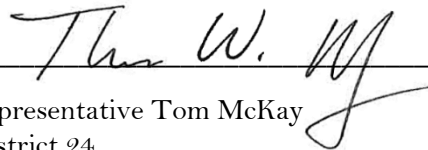
Representative DeLena Johnson
District 11



Representative Christopher Kurka
District 7



Representative Kevin McCabe
District 8



Representative Tom McKay
District 24



Representative Mike Prax
District 3



Representative Laddie Shaw
District 26



Representative Cathy Tilton
District 12