



# Alaska Longline

## FISHERMEN'S ASSOCIATION

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To: The Honorable Congressman Young  
Re: H.R. 200 and Graves Amendment

Date: June 27, 2018

The Alaska Longline Fishermen's Association (ALFA) represents fishing families who deliver high quality seafood into coastal Alaska fishing communities. Our members promote sustainable fisheries and thriving fishing communities through research, advocacy and a firm commitment to science-based fisheries management. We represent hundreds of family wage jobs and a commercial fishing industry that contributes billions of dollars to the U.S. economy.

While we appreciate your efforts to advance reauthorization of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, ALFA cannot support H.R. 200 as currently drafted. As we indicated in our recent meetings with you, H.R. 200 may allow the recreational sector to exceed scientifically derived annual catch limits, which would undermine science-based management of America's fisheries. Adherence to annual catch limits has been critical to Alaska successful management of both state and federal fisheries and the key to rebuilding over 40 fish stocks since the MSA was reauthorized in 2006. Alaska's Congressional delegation has always led the way in promoting sustainable fisheries through science-based management and we ask that you clarify H.R. 200 to remove any ambiguity relative to your intent to restrict ALL sectors, commercial and recreational, to scientifically-defined annual catch limits.

I would also like to voice ALFA's strong opposition to the Graves Amendment and ask that you OPPOSE this amendment. The Graves Amendment is extremely punitive to commercial fishermen, requiring royalty payments from the hard-working fishermen who are currently struggling to pay the high cost of fishery limited access permits, monitoring programs, and landing taxes. Adding a royalty fee to this financial load will bankrupt small fishing operations. In addition, the Graves Amendment eliminates a core principle of the MSA by excluding active stakeholders who have invested in catching or harvesting American seafood from serving on the regional fishery management councils. MSA founders such as yourself understood the benefit of engaging those with local expertise and a long-term investment in developing appropriate and effective management strategies for fisheries in their region. Provided the balance is appropriate, these actively engaged stakeholders inform policy development to reflect both scientific expertise and practical understanding

of the marine resource. We believe they play an essential role on the regional councils and urge your ongoing support of their participation on regional councils.

Again, ALFA appreciates your attention to reauthorization of the MSA, but we are concerned that H.R. 200 jeopardizes the long-term health of federal fisheries by allowing one sector to exceed scientifically derived annual catch limits, which will ultimately bankrupt both commercial and recreational fisheries. We are particularly concerned by the punitive and mis-informed implications of the Graves Amendment and ask that you OPPOSE this amendment. Thank you for your hard work on behalf of Alaskans in general and Alaska's fishing families in particular.

Sincerely,



Dick Curran  
(ALFA Board President)