

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

May 21, 2018

President Donald J. Trump
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Trump,

We appreciate your focus on negotiating trade agreements that prioritize opportunities for American exporters to ship their products around the world, and we support your insistence that our trade partners meet their obligations under the agreements they have entered into with the United States. We wish to express concern, however, over the potential for U.S. seafood exports to be drawn into unrelated trade policy conflicts, to the detriment of Alaska's commercial seafood industry.

Alaska has the most productive commercial fisheries in the United States, producing more in volume and value than all other states, and is crucial in creating tens of thousands of jobs and sustaining remote coastal communities. Alaska Pollock, salmon, halibut, whiting, cod, crab, sole, and other species harvested by our fishermen help feed the nation and, increasingly, the world. Indeed, in recent years, fully 60 percent of the value of Alaska's seafood harvest has been exported. Thanks in large part to Alaska, the United States is now the second largest supplier of fish to China, the world's largest seafood market. As global seafood consumption increases, demand for Alaskan seafood products will only rise with it.

Under these circumstances, it would be deeply regrettable if major export markets decided to retaliate against Alaska seafood exports for unrelated trade policy actions by the United States. Depending on the specific action undertaken by our trade partners, the targeted exports would be made uncompetitive in an instant. Over the longer term, such retaliation would be difficult to dislodge once in place, and the associated market share would be nearly impossible to reclaim once lost to foreign competitors. We are particularly concerned about retaliation by China against Alaska exports, as demand among Chinese consumers for premium Alaska seafood is strong and only growing stronger. Markets for premium Alaska seafood products in China are critically important, especially since another major foreign market was eliminated in 2014 when Russia implemented a seafood import ban in retaliation for U.S. sanctions related to the crisis in Ukraine.

Accordingly, as your Administration continues to emphasize trade enforcement, we urge you to avoid any trade policy action—especially action involving China—that could trigger tariff-based or other retaliatory actions against the nation’s seafood exports. Alaska’s fishermen and their families depend on reliable access to global markets to sustain their businesses and their communities. We ask for your continued help in keeping these markets open.

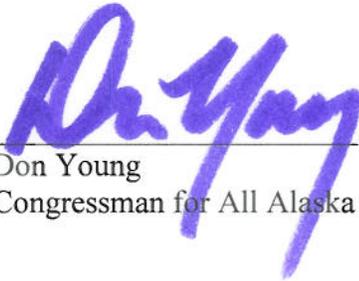
Sincerely,



Lisa Murkowski
United States Senator



Dan Sullivan
United States Senator



Don Young
Congressman for All Alaska

cc: The Honorable Mike Pompeo
The Honorable Wilbur Ross
The Honorable Robert Lighthizer