



Alaska Trollers Association

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Representative Eric Feige, Co-Chairman
Representative Paul Seaton, Co-Chair
Representative Peggy Wilson, Vice-Chairman
House Resources
Juneau, AK 99811

RE: HJR 8 Genetically Modified Salmon and Labeling Requirements

Dear Representatives Feige, Seaton, Wilson, and Committee Members:

The Alaska Trollers Association (ATA) strongly supports HJR 8, which seeks among other things to persuade the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to deny the approval and marketing of genetically engineered salmon in the United States.

ATA is pleased to read the strong policy statements embodied in HJR 8. We believe the resolution appropriately reflects not only the concerns and wishes of most Alaskan's, but also those of a vast majority of American citizen's.

It is time the public be allowed the opportunity to openly consider and debate the issues surrounding the most intimate of topics – our nation's food supply. The scientific community is not yet done analyzing the risks of genetically engineered foods, but it is well known that there are professional disagreements regarding its safety. Poll after poll has reveals the public's distrust of genetically engineered foods, yet the FDA has been allowed to conduct its analysis under a cloak of secrecy, in order to protect the patent rights of the companies involved. How can that be?

Here in Alaska our concerns extend beyond the food on our plates to the fish with tails that transit our waters. Farmed fish from British Columbia and Washington State escape on a regular basis and are already harvested in our fisheries. Our members are concerned about the impact of those fish on our wild stocks - everything from disease transmission to disruption on the spawning grounds. What new impacts will genetically engineered fish bring? At this point, we just don't know, but the risk seems far too high for a fish dependent state like our own.

I have attached for the record ATA's comments to the FDA on genetically engineered salmon and labeling requirements. This issue is of significant concern to our association. Should you have additional questions, or if I can otherwise be of help, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Thank you for considering ATA's point of view on this matter.

Best regards,

Dale Kelley, Executive Director