



UNITED FISHERMEN OF ALASKA

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March 4, 2018

Representative Dan Ortiz
Alaska House of Representatives
State Capitol Room 513
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Re: Support of Fishermen's Fund Legislation: HB 379

Dear Representative Ortiz,

First, thank you for attending our recent membership meeting. We appreciate your time reviewing legislation important to our members, including HB 379.

UFA respectfully submits the following letter in support of HB 379 – “An Act relating to claims against protection and indemnity insurance policies of vessel owners.”

HB 379 amends AS § 23.35.145, which allows a commercial fishing owner/employer to recover from the Fishermen's Fund (“Fund”) fifty percent (50%) of the owner's protection and indemnity insurance deductible in cases where an injured crewmember files a claim for benefits with the Fund and the owner's insurance. If enacted into law, HB 379 would allow a vessel owner to recover the full amount of the insurance deductible, or an amount not to exceed \$5,000.

HB 379 provides an additional incentive to commercial fishing vessel owners to obtain protection and indemnity insurance to fully cover a crewmember's medical expenses in the event of an injury sustained while in the service of the vessel instead of relying on the Fund, which is meant to be the payee of last resort.

Thank you for your consideration and your interest in issues affecting the commercial fishing industry in Alaska.

Kind Regards,

Jerry McCune
President

Frances H. Leach
Executive Director

CC: Rep. Louise Stutes: Chair, House Fisheries Committee