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Governor Mike Dunleavy
STATE OF ALASKA

August 20, 2021

The Honorable Gina Raimondo
Secretary
United States Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Secretary Raimondo:

As the Governor of Alaska, which is home to diverse and sustainable seafood industries, including emerging mariculture sectors that have developed and increased after Presidential Executive Order “Promoting American Seafood Competitiveness and Economic Growth” that was issued by former President Trump on May 7, 2020. The Executive Order, in part, directs identification of Aquaculture Opportunity Areas (AOA) in U.S. waters. I am formally requesting your consideration of designating AOAs in Alaskan waters.

Alaska has over 30,000 miles of coastline with clean, pristine, nutrient-rich waters, and currently produces over \$2 billion of seafood annually; more seafood through wild harvest than the rest of the U.S. combined. While the mariculture industry in Alaska is still in its infancy (valued at \$1.5 million in 2019), the potential for increased and sustained economic development in Alaskan coastal communities is immense, and the industry is poised to experience significant growth in the near future. Since 2017, Alaska has seen over a 400 percent increase in aquatic farm lease applications. The designation of AOAs would provide additional support for this growth by making available invaluable siting information and spatial analysis of waters off Alaska.

Alaska is the ideal place for mariculture, and has the largest existing seafood processing infrastructure in the U.S. There are approximately 9,000 vessels registered in Alaska for commercial fishing, along with their experienced operators, and they have the capacity to expand into mariculture operations. Mariculture production cycles can mesh with the seasonal low periods for both seafood processors and fishermen. Larger Alaskan seafood processors have shown interest in both farming and processing seaweed and oysters. With the largest amount of state and federal waters, and the least amount of conflicting uses of all the states, designating AOAs in Alaska makes sense. In addition, studies show that mariculture provides benefits to surrounding ecosystems such as mitigating ocean acidification in local waters, which could help protect wild shellfish stocks.

Secretary Raimondo

August 20, 2021

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I appreciate your willingness to consider designating AOAs in Alaska. The benefits would extend far beyond the mariculture industry in Alaska, and support expansion of a more resilient food supply chain for the U.S.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mike Dunleavy".

Mike Dunleavy
Governor

From: [Haller, Camilo \(Federal\)](#)
To: [DOCExecSec](#)
Subject: Fwd: Ltr for Secretary Raimondo
Date: Saturday, August 21, 2021 7:37:33 PM
Attachments: [0141_001.pdf](#)

Camilo Haller
Office of Legislative Affairs
Department of Commerce

From: Sykes, Stephanie (Federal) <SSykes@doc.gov>
Sent: Friday, August 20, 2021 10:38:25 PM
To: ExecSecPOCs <ExecSecPOCs@doc.gov>
Cc: Paolino, Joseph (Federal) <JPaolino@doc.gov>; Haller, Camilo (Federal) <CHaller@doc.gov>; Day, Christopher (Federal) <CDay@doc.gov>
Subject: Fwd: Ltr for Secretary Raimondo

Thank you!

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From: Knudson, Kip C (GOV) <kip.knudson@Alaska.gov>
Sent: Friday, August 20, 2021 8:41 PM
To: Sykes, Stephanie (Federal)
Subject: Fwd: Ltr for Secretary Raimondo

Incoming.

Kip Knudson
Director, State/Federal Relations
Office of Alaska Governor Mike Dunleavy
907-382-0219

From: Hull, Angela (GOV) <angela.hull@alaska.gov>
Sent: Friday, August 20, 2021 8:35:19 PM
To: Knudson, Kip C (GOV) <kip.knudson@Alaska.gov>
Subject: Ltr for Secretary Raimondo

Can you distribute please?

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