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The Honorable Sonny Perdue
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave SW
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Secretary Perdue,

We are writing to express our strong support for the attached request submitted to the Department of Agriculture (USDA) by the Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute (ASMI) that you exercise your authority under Section 32 to purchase \$100 million of Alaska Pollock. Alaska's Pollock producers are suffering severe harm due to the deterioration of trade relations with China. China imposed retaliatory tariffs on consumer-ready Alaska Pollock products in July 2018.

Alaska Pollock is one of the most valuable fisheries in the United States due to its tremendous volume, production versatility, and product favorability among consumers. Alaska Pollock is also essential to the livelihood of thousands of fishermen who play an important role in both the Alaskan and national economies. Alaska harvests an average 2.5 billion pounds of Alaska Pollock each year using a rigorous management process that safeguards the health of the stock and assures continued production year after year. Because Alaska Pollock makes up one-third of the United States' total seafood output, Alaska Pollock producers are a fundamental engine of our nation's seafood industry.

Retaliatory tariffs put in place by China are threatening this industry. Robust markets for Alaska Pollock have been carefully developed in China, as well as in Europe and the United States. With Chinese tariffs in place on seafood imports, Alaska Pollock producers are suffering as they see diminished market share for Alaska Pollock products exported to China.

As a sustainably harvested, low-fat source of protein, Alaska Pollock can contribute significantly to the health and wellbeing of food-insecure Americans who rely on USDA programs for assistance. As the request letter provided by ASMI states, deteriorating trade relations between the United States and China have exerted downward price pressures on Alaska Pollock products and created an opportunity for the federal government to purchase these products at a favorable price point.

There are over 17 million food-insecure households in the United States. Many elderly Americans, children, working adults, and members of the military do not get enough to eat on a

consistent basis. Further, a study conducted by your Department estimated that 80 to 90 percent of Americans are not consuming the federally-recommended two servings of seafood each week.

The Agricultural Marketing Service has recognized the importance of supporting Alaskan fishermen in the past by authorizing purchases of Alaska Pollock and pink salmon. Now, more than ever, Alaska fishermen need your support as they navigate the impacts of recent retaliatory trade measures on Alaskan seafood products. By initiating a purchase of Alaska Pollock products, USDA can mitigate the impacts of harmful tariffs while simultaneously providing a nutritious and sustainable protein source to American consumers who utilize federal food programs. We urge you to use your authority as Secretary to initiate a \$100 million purchase of Alaska Pollock products under Section 32 in order to support the livelihoods of fishermen and the health of food-insecure Americans.

We appreciate your review of this request, and look forward to hearing from you. Please contact our respective offices with your questions.

Sincerely,



Lisa Murkowski
United States Senator



Dan Sullivan
United States Senator