November 21, 2009

Governor Sean Parnell
Office of the Governor
P.O. Box 110001
Juneau, Alaska 99811-0001

Dear Governor Parnell;

The Bristol Bay Regional Seafood Development Association represents 1800 driftnet salmon fishermen who live in the Bristol Bay region, in many other parts of Alaska and in most states in the nation. We assess ourselves each year to support projects that increase the quality and value of the Bristol Bay salmon fishery. We are one of two self-assessing RSDAs in Alaska – the other located in Prince William Sound.

We are writing to encourage you to support a funding request by the University of Alaska’s Marine Advisory Program (MAP), that is in the draft UA FY11 Operating Budget. From our perspective, MAP is one of most valuable programs in the University. They share our vision of moving the seafood industry in Bristol Bay forward so that all of us who participate can benefit from the salmon we harvest, both now and into the next generation.

We work closely with the Dillingham MAP agent, but we also work with the MAP agents from other communities in Alaska, where many Bristol Bay permit holders reside. Just this spring, MAP produced a DVD tutorial on icing fish upon harvest. Many of our members used this video and I know that several of the seafood buyers in the Bay sent it to their permit holders. Additionally a number of up-and-coming Bristol Bay permit holders attended the Alaska Young Fishermen’s Summit.
Some of the most valuable MAP sites and faculty members, including the Dillingham position, do not have secure funding. Offices in Petersburg, Nome, Dillingham, Unalaska and Cordova may close due to lack of funding. This program has direct application to what we do at the Bristol Bay RSDA and we urge the state to invest in this small University program that makes a real difference in coastal Alaska.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Bob Waldrop
Executive Director,
Bristol Bay Regional Seafood Development Association

cc: Karen Rehfeld, Director
Office of Management and Budget
P.O. Box 110020
Juneau, AK 99811-0020

Cora Campbell, Office of the Governor
PO Box 110001
Juneau, AK 99811-0020