February 26, 2010

Senator Lyman Hoffman  
Alaska State Legislature  
State Capital Building, Room 518  
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Senator Hoffman:

The Bristol Bay Native Association represents 31 communities in the Bristol Bay region.

We are writing to ask you to support funding for the University’s Marine Advisory Program. In our view, MAP is one of most valuable programs in the University. They share our vision of supporting economically strong communities in Bristol Bay with a strong resource base, both now and into the next generation. And they partner with local groups to focus their program on community needs and priorities.

We work closely with and advise the Bristol Bay MAP agent on projects such as training in the Board of Fisheries and North Pacific Fishery Management Council process, and in working with local communities on small business development and seafood harvesting and processing improvements. Just this spring, MAP produced a DVD tutorial on icing your fish upon harvest and many of our resident fishermen used this video to increase the value of their catch. A number of local young and active Bristol Bay permit holders attended the Alaska Young Fishermen’s Summit, held recently in Anchorage. Our MAP agent is a resource to our community and region.

We are fortunate to have a MAP agent that lives in Dillingham and serves the Bristol Bay region, but at this point, the University does not have long-term secure funding for the position. This funding request would mean that Bristol Bay, as well as the other regions listed in the funding request, could be assured that the University can commit long term to having a MAP agent in the region. The other communities dealing with the same problem include Nome, Unalaska, Cordova, Petersburg and Kodiak. We urge the state to invest in MAP in all of these sites.

Sincerely,

Ralph Andersen  
Chief Executive Officer