

*Alaska State Legislature*  
*Kenai Peninsula Delegation*



**Senator Peter Micciche, District O**  
**Representative Ben Carpenter, Dist. 29**

**Senator Gary Stevens, District P**  
**Representative Sarah Vance, Dist. 31**

*Official Business*

October 28, 2020

The Honorable Governor Mike Dunleavy  
550 West 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue,  
Suite 1700  
Anchorage, AK 99501  
VIA ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION

Dear Governor Dunleavy,

As the Legislators elected to represent the Kenai Peninsula, we write today to express our support for the recent declaration of a local disaster made by the Kenai Peninsula Borough regarding the 2020 Cook Inlet Commercial Salmon Fishing Season and ask that you declare a State of Alaska economic disaster for the Upper Cook Inlet fisheries and provide for a recovery plan.

The Cook Inlet has been the home of commercial fishing for well over 100 years. In most recent history, commercial fishermen, of all gear types, have seen diminished returns and reduced fishing opportunities as the Department of Fish & Game works to manage for sustainable returns for the benefit of all Alaskans. Fluctuations in returns and corresponding harvests are nothing new or unusual but this year was especially difficult.

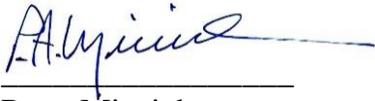
Although there are many reasons resulting in the reduction in overall catches and price impacts related to a COVID19-depressed market, the fact remains that commercial fishermen in Upper Cook Inlet experienced one of the worst seasons on record. In fact, 2020 was the worst season since 1971. With an estimated ex-vessel value of only slightly over \$5000 per operation, this season was devastating. A reduction of 82% from the 10-year average ex-vessel value is just too large to ignore.

Families who have fished these waters for generations are seeing their investments wither and the very real possibility of bankruptcy grow closer. Abnormally low harvest levels mean a dire financial year for these businesses than have been experienced in past years.

Today we want to ask for your support of our local fishers, their families, and crewmembers. A disaster declaration will mean so much to hard working Alaskans.

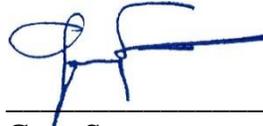
Thank you in advance for your thoughtful consideration of this request and we ask that you keep in mind the Alaskan families who will be suffering through a winter with much lower income due to forces beyond their control.

Sincerely,



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Peter Micciche  
Senator, District O



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Gary Stevens  
Senator, District P



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Ben Carpenter  
Representative, District 29



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Sarah Vance  
Representative, District 31