

Bruce Schactler, Coalition Director
National Seafood Marketing Coalition
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Email: nsmc@gci.net



RE: Support for Re-creation of the *American Fisheries Advisory Committee*

Dear Mr. Schactler,

February 19, 2016

I am writing on behalf of the Alaska Fisheries Development Foundation (AFDF). AFDF was formed in 1978 as one of several “fisheries development foundations” across the country with the mission to fully develop the nation’s fishery resources. Over the years, AFDF has experience with the NOAA Saltonstall-Kennedy (SK) Grant Program, and most recently applied for and received funding. However, our experience during the 2014-15 cycle points to a flawed system. AFDF submitted two applications during this cycle for two separate projects. Both applications were written in similar styles with similar supporting documentation, but they were scored drastically different by the two separate 3-person panels. Consequently, one application received funding and the other application never moved beyond the initial panel review.

The AFDF Board of Directors has read your proposal to re-create the ***American Fisheries Advisory Committee*** as a way to implement best practices for effective use of grant funds within the SK Grant Program. Utilizing an industry advisory group with broad understanding of the U.S. seafood industry will better align development needs, market trends and priorities with funded projects under the SK Program for more effective results and benefits to the public.

For the reasons mentioned above, ***AFDF supports the re-creation of the American Fisheries Advisory Committee, paired with consistent annual funding of the SK Grant Program in the range of \$25 million.***

Please contact me if you have further questions.

Sincerely,


Julie Decker, Executive Director

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Harvester, Region IV
American Seafoods Company

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