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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: MEDIA ADVISORY

Senate Approves Resolution Creating Food Working Group Requests Collaboration with Alaska Food Policy Council

Statewide

WHAT:

House Concurrent Resolution 1 (HCR1) sponsored by Representative Bill Stoltze passed the Alaska State Senate today with no opposition and is awaiting transmittal to the Governor. The resolution now goes into effect after having already passed the House on 3/11/13.

The resolution asks the Governor to create a food resource development workgroup whose mission is to advise the legislature on food policy issues and to bring together various food stakeholders for the purpose of promoting local food markets and increasing Alaska's food security. The resolution had strong support from a plethora of various food related organizations, including the Alaska Food Policy Council who was identified as a key stakeholder in the document.

"This resolution recognizes the importance to all Alaskans of developing a strong and secure food system that can provide jobs, support healthy communities, and increase food security to feed the hungry and insulate us from potential disruptions along the food supply chain," says Lisa Sadleir-Hart (Sitka), a supporter of HCR1 and Governing Board Member of the Alaska Food Policy Council.

Over 200 Alaskans have joined the Alaska Food Policy Council (AFPC) including stakeholders from the farming, fishing, business, food banking/anti-hunger network, health, and environmental conservation sectors of our state. They formed and joined this policy council because of their shared concerns about the many food challenges Alaska faces, and are looking for a way to tackle them in a comprehensive way.

"Businesses see that over a billion dollars a year that Alaskans spend on food is being exported to communities in the lower 48. These 'food dollars' could be staying right here in our communities, putting people to work," says Victoria

Briggs, owner of Ugashik Wild Salmon Company, Inc. in the Bristol Bay region. Victoria is also a Governing Board Member of the Alaska Food Policy Council.

Health professionals see skyrocketing rates of obesity, and deaths from diet-related disease, like diabetes, heart disease, and cancer. Families and food safety advocates are worried about death and illness from contaminated food.

Teachers see kids in school performing poorly because they are hungry or eating too many empty calories and junk food.

“Families in communities with high fuel prices are forced to choose between paying for heat or for food, and food is losing,” reports Mary Sullivan of Food Bank of Alaska and the Legislative Workgroup Chair of the Alaska Food Policy Council: “We are so glad that Rep. Stoltze and all of HCR1’s co-sponsors took an interest in this important issue and championed the cause to bring us all together to the same table and really work collaboratively to find solutions, promote innovations and increase access to Alaska food.

We at the Alaska Food Policy Council really believe that the group that would be created by this resolution will ultimately help to both bring Alaska’s rich food resources to market and address issues of access to healthy, nutritious, adequate supplies of food for all Alaskans.”

WHO: REPRESENTATIVE(S) STOLTZE (sponsor), COSPONSORS: Hughes, Gattis, Keller, Neuman, Thompson, Herron, Costello, Millett, Isaacson, Tuck, Tarr, Kerttula, Kreiss-Tomkins, Drummond, Munoz, Foster, P. Wilson, Seaton, Feige, Chenault, T. Wilson, Johnson, Kawasaki, LeDoux, Pruitt, Saddler

SENATOR(S) Bishop (sponsor SCR1, companion legislation), McGuire, Dyson, Micciche, Kelly, Ellis, Stevens, Dunleavy, Meyer, Egan

Alaska Food Policy Council

WHEN: Passed Senate with no opposition 3/18/13. Passed House 3/11/13 with no opposition. 3/18/13, awaiting transmittal to the Governor.

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