



UNITED FISHERMEN OF ALASKA

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UFA welcomes incoming Governor Parnell

United Fishermen of Alaska (UFA) welcomes incoming Governor Sean Parnell as he assumes leadership of the nation's leading seafood producing state. UFA represents 37 commercial fishing groups from fisheries throughout the state and its offshore waters. Alaska represents 60% of U.S. seafood production, and commercial fishing represents the largest private-sector employer in the state.

"We appreciate the continuity of staff with the new governor's fisheries policy team, including the fisheries policy advisor, commissioners of Fish and Game, Environmental Conservation, Natural Resources, and Commerce, and we hope to foster a close working relationship with Governor Parnell to ensure the continuation of Alaska's sustainable fisheries," said UFA Executive Director Mark Vinsel.

"While the aggregate picture of Alaska's fisheries seem abundant and most fishing families are busy fishing, the one constant is change and we cannot afford complacency. We look to meet with Governor Parnell very soon, to make sure we're not going to backslide into repeating the difficulties of the early 2000s, when many fishermen were driven out of business, said UFA President Joe Childers.

"Alaska's ability to compete in global markets, access to fisheries, protection of habitat, a fair Board of Fisheries process, attention to leadership in fisheries science, and strong state sponsored marketing are among the myriad aspects where the governor's leadership can make or break our fisheries and the Alaska economy," said Childers.

"UFA intends to continue working with other resource-based industries in Alaska on development strategies that incorporate sound environmental protection measures. UFA recognizes that Alaska needs to be a part of the national energy independence program, and that construction of the new gas pipeline is of priority significance to the Alaskan economy, including Alaskan and PNW fishermen that harvest seafood off the coast of Alaska," said UFA's National committee chairman Arni Thomson.

The UFA Board has had the pleasure of meeting with incoming Governor Parnell in the recent past, and we fully expect his transition to be a smooth one. We look forward to having the opportunity to work with incoming Governor Parnell so we may continue protecting the health of Alaska's fishing resources for food, personal use, and livelihood," said UFA Executive Director Mark Vinsel.

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