

## No on Proposal 243

Fritz Johnson for BBEDC

Should Egypt have a say in how Alaska herring are managed? There's a great geography lesson in the internet-generated petition with 300-odd names in support of Proposal 243. A rough count showed 115 Alaskan signers, give or take a few, and 145 non-Alaskans. The 145 non-Alaska signers were roughly divided between the Lower 48 and 26 different foreign countries. Brazil led the pack with 8, followed by France and Britain with 7, then Italy and Germany with 5 each. I won't list the homeland of all the foreign signers, but Albania, Bulgaria, Slovenia, Romania, Turkey, South Africa, Malaysia, the United Arab Emirates and nine other countries are represented.

It's reasonable to suspect that many of the signers are motivated more by ideology than any real knowledge of Alaska herring. And it would concern us if the Alaska Board of Fisheries were to attach any weight to the fact that they signed this petition.

We are sympathetic to the concerns expressed by the Sitka Tribe. But we believe the Department of Fish and Game has the tools it needs to manage herring effectively for sustainability, and that it should use those tools to address local Alaska concerns. But Proposal 243 is overkill, and will needlessly restrict communities of western Alaska from developing herring fisheries adjacent to their communities where harvestable surpluses exist. Proposal 243's effect on existing herring fisheries can't accurately be predicted in light of the apparent international interest, however naïve, in the management of Alaska herring. Please vote no on Proposal 243.