

Personal testimony for the State Fish and Game Board, Dated January 16, 2018

My name is Harriet Miyasato Beleal, my Tlingit name is Kus'ah'sheech and I come from Wrangell, Alaska. My grandmother, Annie Worthington Johnson comes from Auk Bay, Alaska. We are of the Leeka'neei clan. My grandfather was Chester Worthington and was a founding father of the Alaska Native Brotherhood as well as my other grandfather, James Johnson. I am the Vice-President of the Alaska Native Brotherhood, Camp #1 of Sitka, Alaska.

Today, I am here to give my personal testimony on behalf of my children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren for whom I worry for them.

The issue is the herring roe and herring eggs, or lack of. The Fish and Game Board should have one of my personal testimonies but not the main one.

I support and advocate for the Sitka Tribe of Alaska sponsored resolution number 99. Because of the increased fishing efforts of herring in the Sitka Sound area by the commercial fishermen, our herring roe is very rapidly decreasing every year. It is disrupting the spawning patterns of herring in the sound and is causing a high frequency of subsistence herring egg harvest that is not being met. For instance, this year I did not get any herring egg, along with countless others.

The other two STA sponsored proposals are 105 and 106. Proposal 105 would extend the waters closed for the commercial herring fishery for the commercial herring fishery to include half of Nakwasina Sound, Katlian Bay and Aleutkina Bay in order to meet the annual subsistence needs of our native people. "Closure of additional areas requested will increase the opportunity for the Amount Necessary for Subsistence to be met," the proposal says.

Proposal 106 would expand the closed waters in the commercial herring fishery to include the North end of Crow Island, Middle Island, Big Gavanski and Harbor Point, near the ferry terminal. If nothing is done, STA says, quote, "The commercial herring sac roe fishery will continue to disturb prespawning and spawning herring in this area, thus negatively affecting subsistence." We are the losers, as well as our future generations of young people.

We are against resolution 94 and 104 which STA says are aimed at "rescinding existing regulations, which are in place to protect the subsistence harvest of herring eggs. Proposal 104, sponsored by the Southeast Herring Conservation Alliance, asks the Board to reopen the area that the Board of Fisheries closed years ago at the request of subsistence herring egg users, on the north end of town.

We are against Proposal 94, also from SHCA, that asks the Board of Fish to change the Amount Necessary for Subsistence from the current level of 136,000-237,000 pounds to 60,000-120,000 pounds,

I am a tribal member of the Sitka Tribes of Alaska, as well as my six children, fifteen grandchildren, and twenty-five great-grandchildren but I am supporting these resolutions personally and thank Sitka Tribes of Alaska for standing up and fighting for us at this critical time. STA represents over 4,000 tribal citizens

One other thing I would like to mention, when I was fourteen years old, in Klawock, Alaska, across bay from our house, there were salmon, wall to wall, in the creek and so much we couldn't catch all of them. No fish and game then. Also, my Canadian relatives who have a cabin at Lake Bennett, can catch all the fish and game and there are no regulations, yet they have plenty. Food for thought. God bless and thank you for representing myself and my family on this board.

Sincerely -

*Harriet Miyasato Beleal*

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