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May 3, 2010

The Honorable Gary Locke
Secretary of Commerce
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave NW
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Secretary Locke,

Re: Appointments to the North Pacific Fishery Management Council

The **Halibut Coalition** is a broad-based non-profit organization that includes 13 member groups and over 450 individual members from Alaska, Washington and Oregon. Our membership includes professional fishermen, fish processors, and other individuals committed to the sustainable harvest and management of Alaska's halibut resource. The Halibut Coalition endorses Governor Parnell's nominations for appointment of **Duncan Fields** and **James Hubbard** to the North Pacific Fishery Management Council (NPFMC), and respectfully requests your support for these candidates.

Both Duncan Fields and James Hubbard are active fishermen with a firm commitment to sustainable fisheries, a broad knowledge of Alaska's diverse fisheries and a clear understanding of the fishery management process. Duncan is completing a three year term on the Council, and has distinguished himself as a careful decision-maker who pays close attention to detail, listens carefully to the public, and consistently develops policy that protects the resource and Alaska's fishery dependent communities. James Hubbard has experience as small boat fishermen, a processor, and an innovator seafood marketer, giving him a depth of perspectives that will inform Council decisions. He has actively engaged in the fisheries science of stock assessment and research, and generously dedicates his time and expertise. Both Duncan and James are problem-solvers with deep respect for all who engage in the fisheries and the fishery management process. They are open-minded but firm in their commitments to resource conservation. In short, Duncan and James are fine candidates who will strengthen the fishery management process in Alaska.

As you are aware, the NPFMC is responsible for a coast-line equal to the coast-line of the rest of the United States combined, and a diverse array of fishery resources. In terms of volume, Alaska accounts for 62% of the seafood harvested in the United States and commercial fisheries

Alaska Longline Fishermen's Association • Cordova District Fishermen • Deep Sea Fishermen's Union • Fishing Vessel Owners Association • Halibut Association of North America • Kachemak Bay Fisheries Association • North Pacific Fisheries Association • Petersburg Vessel Owners Association • Sea Food Producers Cooperative • Southeast Alaska Fishermen's Alliance • United Cook Inlet Driftnetters Association • United Fishermen's Marketing Association • United Southeast Alaska Gillnetters Association

annually contribute \$5.8 billion to Alaska's economic output. More than 56,600 people are employed in Alaska's commercial seafood industry, which includes fishing fleets as diverse as southeast Alaska's small boat halibut fleet and the Bering Sea Pollock and crab at sea processors.

Given the scope and diversity of the fisheries, it is challenging to select NPFMC members who collectively understand and can represent all fisheries. Alaska's Governor has carefully considered the current composition of the NPFMC when making these nominations, and has wisely selected appropriate nominees.

The Halibut Coalition commends Governor Parnell for his selections and respectfully urges your appointment of Duncan Fields and James Hubbard to the NPFMC.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Linda Behnken". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Linda Behnken
President

Copy: Governor Sean Parnell (ATTN: Ms Cora Campbell)
Senator Lisa Murkowski
Senator Mark Begich
Congressman Don Young