

BRISTOL BAY NATIVE ASSOCIATION
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RESOLUTION 2017- 07

A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING FORMAL INDIGENOUS PARTICIPATION AND REPRESENTATION AT THE INTERNATIONAL MARITIME ORGANIZATION

- WHEREAS:** The Bristol Bay Native Association is an Alaska Native regional non-profit corporation and tribal consortium made up of the 31 federally recognized tribes of the Bristol Bay region of Alaska; and
- WHEREAS:** Bristol Bay and the Alaska Peninsula, located off the coast of southwest Alaska, are celebrated for their pristine quality, bountiful fisheries, and exceptional ecological diversity; and
- WHEREAS:** Villages in the region have a deep cultural reliance on the harvesting and sharing of marine resources for subsistence. The Yup'ik, Aleut and Athabascan peoples benefited from these waters for thousands of years. Traditional practices tie families together through the passing of knowledge from one generation to the next; and
- WHEREAS:** The Bering Sea form one of the most productive high latitude seas, sustaining traditional communities and a world-class commercial seafood industry. All told, the marine ecosystem supports more than 450 species of fish, crustaceans and mollusks, including red king crab, Tanner crab, Pacific halibut, herring, Pollock, Pacific cod, flatfish, sablefish, and all five species of salmon. These fish depend on a healthy population of plankton and other lower-trophic level species for food, including at the sea-surface; and
- WHEREAS:** Bristol Bay and the Bering Sea hosts a diversity of marine mammal species, including Pacific walrus, spotted and harbor seals, and sixteen whale species. Numerous marine mammal species, including seals, whales, and Pacific walrus utilize the winter icepack for resting, rearing and feeding and migrate throughout Bristol Bay, Bering Sea, Bering Strait and the Arctic Ocean. Pacific walrus males aggregate and haul out on islands and capes in Bristol Bay in the summer. Many species of seals feed on abundant resources and haul out on beaches to molt; and
- WHEREAS:** The protection of the world-class natural resources in Bristol Bay and the Bering Sea, including economically and culturally valuable fisheries, and the ecosystem which sustains them, is in the highest public interest; and
- WHEREAS:** International shipping regulated by the IMO can impact these natural resources. As shipping increases throughout the Arctic and Bering Sea due to climate change, tribal and indigenous perspectives at entities like the IMO are needed to provide input on mitigating potential impacts, especially on issues related to accidental oil spills and threats associated with heavy fuel oil, toxic ship emissions and wastewater/ballast water discharges that can impact the environment and wildlife such as marine mammals that indigenous peoples here have depended on for thousands of years for subsistence; and

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WHEREAS: While Bristol Bay lies entirely within the territorial sea and Exclusive Economic Zone of the United States of America, subject to federal jurisdiction and regulation, species that our tribes depend on migrate between different regions and international waters in the Bering Sea and Arctic Ocean that could be affected by international shipping, and thus the regulations that the IMO has jurisdiction over; and

WHEREAS: The IMO and the United States Delegation to IMO already receive formal input on shipping issues from many stakeholders such as environmental groups and private companies through official consultative status. The IMO has already considered and decided on many issues related to shipping pollution and potential impacts of international shipping to wildlife in the Arctic and Bering Sea. In January 2017 for example, the Polar Code that was adopted by the IMO created rules in the Arctic and Antarctic, without formal input from indigenous peoples; and

WHEREAS: There is still no formal indigenous entity or body that has official consultative status at the IMO or with the US Delegation to the IMO; and

WHEREAS: Many decision-makers and stakeholders involved with the IMO processes can benefit from the knowledge of indigenous peoples in the Arctic and Subarctic. A formal indigenous presence at the IMO can also more directly involve tribes on issues and processes in international shipping regulations that can impact their people and region.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Full Board of Directors of the Bristol Bay Native Association that it requests that the US Delegation to the International Maritime Organization to work with tribes, tribal consortia and other indigenous groups to set up processes and mechanisms to more formally involve indigenous peoples at the International Maritime Organization.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Bristol Bay Native Association urges other stakeholders and decision-makers to work together to create capacity and funding for indigenous peoples to have a more formal presence at the International Maritime Organization and its related processes.

Signed: 
Fred T. Angasan, Chairman of the Board

CERTIFICATION:

I, the undersigned Secretary of the Bristol Bay Native Association, do hereby certify that the Full Board of Directors of the Bristol Bay Native Association duly passed the foregoing resolution on the 23rd day of March, 2017 at a duly called and convened meeting, and that a quorum was present.

Signed: 
Robert Heyano, Secretary