

State of Alaska
Department of Commerce,
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Alaska Department of Commerce requesting \$3.75 million investment in seafood industry
State investment will make Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute more competitive for federal grant funds

October 26, 2018 JUNEAU – A \$3.75 million general fund investment in the Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute (ASMI) will ensure the public-private partnership is able to maintain critical activities well into the future. Despite recent cuts to its state funding, ASMI has relied on its industry self-assessment and federal receipts in conjunction with prudent fiscal management and efficient operations to continue to increase positive awareness of the Alaska Seafood brand, deliver important promotional programs aligned with industry marketing efforts, and champion Alaska fisheries management imperatives.

“The progress on international tariffs is encouraging,” said Commissioner Mike Navarre. “But in the face of fierce competition from competitor species, the Russian seafood embargo, and uncertainty surrounding Brexit, we owe it to Alaskans to make a sensible investment in this important segment of our export economy to protect its long-term well-being.”

The seafood industry is a major segment of the Alaska economy. According to the 2017 McDowell Group assessment of Alaska’s seafood industry, seafood directly employs more workers than any other private sector industry in Alaska and produces \$12.8 billion in economic output in the state.

Specifically, this appropriation would bolster the match on a federal grant program, which will strengthen ASMI’s annual application for federal funding. The competitively awarded federal grant for international marketing allows ASMI to market Alaska seafood internationally, funding consumer and trade programs in 30 countries. ASMI competes each year against such national stalwarts as Sunkist Growers, Washington Apples, the Cotton Council Incorporated, and the U.S. Meat Export Federation.

In addition to a state investment, ASMI remains committed to the voluntary fish tax and pursuing grants and partnerships to fund its mission-critical programs. However, the loss of state funding, and the accompanying loss of federal match, poses an ongoing challenge. As a result of the fiscal crisis and Legislative intent language, ASMI has significantly reduced its dependence on unrestricted general funds. Over the last five years, ASMI’s total annual spend plan has decreased by over \$8.4 million. The reduced budget has limited all ASMI programs, including a complete elimination of the domestic consumer advertising program.

The Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute (ASMI) is a marketing organization with the mission of increasing the economic value of the Alaska seafood resource. It conducts consumer campaigns, public relations and advertising activities, and aligns with industry efforts for maximum effectiveness. ASMI also functions as a brand manager of the Alaska Seafood family of brands. Find ASMI online at alaskaseafood.org. ASMI is a public-private partnership between the State of Alaska and the Alaska seafood industry. ASMI is established in AS 16.51.010 as a public corporation of the state in the Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development, but has a legal existence independent of and separate from the state. For additional information about the Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development and its other agencies, visit commerce.alaska.gov.

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