



What Alaskans are Saying about the *Improving ARCTIC Act*:

Farming/Agriculture Leaders:

“Arctic climate agriculture has much opportunity for growth and being a key player in diversifying our economy and building a healthy food system. We applaud Senator Murkowski for her efforts in building programs that support Alaska’s farmers and ranchers, improve research to understand the needs and benefits of farming in arctic climates, providing Alaska with the tools to build a robust food system that supports local production and improves access to nutritious foods,” **said Scott Murgage, President Alaska Farm Bureau.**

“There is significant public interest in the Micro-Grants for Food Security Program and the need to increase food security in Alaska, where we import more than 95% of our food,” **said Bryan Scoresby, Director of the Alaska Division of Agriculture.** “By removing the 3% cap on administrative costs, this will allow the Division to increase capacity and improve efficiency to better serve Alaskans who apply for a Micro-Grant.” Director Scoresby supports Senator Murkowski’s provision to create a forgivable loan program for small commercial food producers that would improve viability of a private business enterprise and benefits cash flow and profitability when principal repayment and interest expenses are eliminated. “Finally, I thank Senator Murkowski for working to ensure that Alaskans get our fair share of federal funding for agricultural research, which is limited across the state,” he said. “Our arctic environment needs additional research to improve seed varieties for crops grown north of 60 degrees latitude to increase food security in Alaska.”

“Kawerak’s Reindeer Herders Association applauds the work of our senior Senator, Lisa Murkowski, in introducing this bill, delivering on our long-term work to promote the in-region, tribal capacity for permitting and producing value-added reindeer meat products to address both market demand and food insecurity in our region. Northwest Alaska bears some of the highest retail food costs in the nation. Kawerak’s RHA is proud to support this bill which provides a tangible, positive step toward promoting food security for our region, our tribes and beyond,” **said Nathan Baring, Program Director, Reindeer Herders Association.**

“On behalf of the University of Alaska Fairbanks Institute of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Extension, Alaska's leading agricultural research organization, I'd like to thank Senator Murkowski for introducing the *Improving ARCTIC Act*. While producing food and fiber is challenging in Alaska, the number of farms has been growing steadily each year. Additional federal support, such as in the *Improving ARCTIC Act*, can help further critical agricultural research that is necessary to not only support Alaska's agriculture industry but to also provide the innovations needed to address production and food security challenges state-wide,” **said Jodie Anderson, Director of the University of Alaska Fairbanks Institute of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Extension.**

Nutrition Leaders:

“We are thrilled to see many important nutrition-related provisions in Senator Murkowski’s *Improving ARCTIC Act*,” said **Jim Baldwin, Chief Executive Officer of Food Bank of Alaska**. “This bill addresses the unique challenges our rural and remote communities face in accessing food assistance by expanding the food bank network and providing additional flexibility to critical federal nutrition programs.”

“Senator Murkowski’s *Improving Agriculture, Research, Cultivation, Timber, and Indigenous Commodities (ARCTIC) Act* aims for greater transparency, inclusion, and capacity building throughout Alaska’s food systems. This act also directly addresses some of the unique needs and challenges faced by Alaskans and reflects place-based solutions expressed by stakeholders and food system advocates. We applaud this effort and encourage bipartisan passage of this act, to broadly improve the Farm Bill for Alaskans,” said **Robbi Mixon, Executive Director, Alaska Food Policy Council**.

“I thank Senator Murkowski for her very hard work in so many areas of the Farm Bill. These improvements will make huge differences in allowing the people of Alaska to become more food secure,” said **Samantha Kirstein, Community Development Director, Fairbanks Community Food Bank**.

“On behalf of the 35 AC grocery stores in rural Alaska, our company is very supportive of the *Improving ARCTIC Act* proposed by Senator Murkowski. Alaska Commercial Company is one of the oldest companies in America with rural trading posts dating back to the late 1700s, and our 1,000+ employees are very aware of the challenges with food production and distribution in Alaska. Senator Murkowski’s bill makes a great number of improvements over the existing Farm Bill and will support both Alaskan agriculture and access to healthy food for generations. I strongly urge you to approve her recommendations,” said **Kyle Hill, President, Alaska Commercial Company**.

Seafood Leaders:

“We applaud Senator Murkowski’s work to expand and sharpen USDA’s vision when it comes to seafood. The seafood provisions in the *Improving ARCTIC Act* will help consumers differentiate between wild harvested seafood and genetically engineered or lab-grown seafood; the provisions also prevent the federal government from imposing off-shore aquaculture on States such as Alaska that have wisely protected wild fish stocks from the impacts of this damaging industry. Senator Murkowski has helped the USDA remember that investments in America’s seafood industry and fishing communities benefit our Nation’s health and food security, and ALFA’s members appreciate her hard work and leadership,” said **Linda Behnken, Alaska Longline Fishermen’s Association**.

“This bill represents the kind of holistic approach we need to promote our responsibly-managed domestic seafood industry with a more level-playing field in the market, support continued work towards 100% utilization in the seafood industry, and explore new opportunities for sustainable

economic development in our coastal communities,” said **Julie Decker, Executive Director, Alaska Fisheries Development Foundation.**

“The Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute (ASMI) is thankful for Senator Murkowski’s long track record of ensuring Alaska’s fishermen and seafood industry have equitable access to USDA programs and fair competition in the U.S. marketplace – the single most valuable destination for Alaska seafood products,” said **ASMI Executive Director Jeremy Woodrow.** “Senator Murkowski’s *Improving ARCTIC Act* will provide consumers critical information on the origin of their seafood, as well as help Alaska fishermen, fishing communities, and its seafood industry prosper as they develop a sustainable resource critical to Alaska’s economy.”

“Southeast Conference is leading a statewide effort to grow mariculture into a \$100 million a year industry in the next 10 years. This bill recognizes the historical and traditional uses of Alaska Natives and provides a multifaceted approach to support and incentivize these efforts to create jobs and wealth that have a primary focus on Indigenous and Underserved Communities' goals for a sustainable mariculture industry,” said **Robert Venables, Executive Director, Southeast Conference.**

“The seafood provisions in Senator Murkowski’s *Improving ARCTIC Act* elevate many of the priorities of fishermen and the seafood industry. Provisions such as establishing a USDA label for wild seafood harvested in U.S. waters and including “cooked crab” as a covered commodity in the USDA Country-of-Origin Labeling (COOL) Program provide assurance to the consumer that the product they are purchasing has been sustainably harvested by American fishermen. We appreciate Senator Murkowski’s support on these issues as well as others included in the ARCTIC Act which aim to support the fishing industry as well as fishing industry support services,” said **Tracy Welch, Executive Director, United Fishermen of Alaska (UFA).**

Rural Development and Housing Leaders:

“Quyana, thank you, to Senator Murkowski for her tireless commitment to the health of Alaska Native and American Indian people. Her leadership and advocacy ensures Alaska’s most remote communities can access the resources for the planning, development, and construction of critically-needed water and sanitation systems. Studies have shown access to clean drinking water and wastewater disposal systems contribute to improving the overall health and well-being of our children, families, and communities in Alaska. We look forward to advancing this great work,” said **Valerie Nurr’araluk Davidson, President/CEO, ANTHC.**

“The need for housing in Alaska is huge. Statistics from the Housing Alaskans Partnership demonstrate the hard costs for construction in Alaska are significantly higher than development in the Lower 48—resulting in fewer projects being constructed, and contributing to a housing shortage that impacts communities across the state. Senator Murkowski’s provision to establish the Denali Housing Fund in the *Improving ARCTIC Act* has the potential to significantly help address Alaska’s housing crisis, especially for lower income residents in rural areas of the state,” said **Garrett Boyle, Federal Co-Chair of the Denali Commission.**