



FISHING COMMUNITIES COALITION

## FCC Applauds Senate Commerce Committee Approval of Young Fishermen's Development Act

### *Community Fishermen Hail Advance of Bipartisan Initiative to Boost America's Future Fishermen, Urge House Action*

Washington, D.C. - Members of the Fishing Communities Coalition (FCC) cheered a major step forward for the *Young Fishermen's Development Act* ([H.R.1240](#), [S.496](#)), as the Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee approved the FCC-backed legislation in a [markup earlier today](#). The bipartisan bill, championed by Senator Dan Sullivan (R-AK) in the Senate, addresses the graying of America's fishing fleet by establishing the first national program for young people entering the commercial fishing industry.

"The Young Fishermen's Development Act will help equip the next generation of commercial fishermen to support our nation's sustainable fisheries and the coastal communities that rely upon them," said Linda Behnken, Executive Director of the Alaska Longline Fishermen's Association, a member of the FCC. "We are grateful that Alaska's Senators Dan Sullivan and Lisa Murkowski and Representative Don Young are leading the push for America's future fishermen. The Young Fishermen's Development Act is a solid investment in our fishing communities and in our country."

"Fishing is a huge industry in Alaska, employing more than any other in our state," said Senator Sullivan. "It is incredibly important that we help break down barriers that prevent new fishermen from filling the ranks of our fishing sector. I appreciate my colleagues advancing my bipartisan bill that will bolster training opportunities and apprenticeship programs, harness the expertise of our experienced fishermen, and offer new grants to enable more young entrepreneurs to build rewarding careers as fishermen."

"The Young Fishermen's Development Act is about opportunity and jobs, food security, and a way of life rooted in tradition here in the Gulf and elsewhere," said Eric Brazer, Deputy Director of the Gulf of Mexico Reef Fish Shareholders' Alliance, a member of the FCC. "We are grateful to Chairman Wicker and the members of the Committee for moving this important bipartisan initiative forward and urge the House to build on this momentum."

The Committee's Ranking Member, Senator Maria Cantwell of Washington, said she was pleased the Committee had advanced legislation that will "help give technical assistance to young fishermen looking to start in the maritime sector."

Young fishermen representing FCC members from every U.S. coast have traveled to Washington, D.C., advocating for the [\*Young Fishermen's Development Act\*](#) (YFDA), which would solidify and unite current piecemeal training efforts into a cohesive, national initiative to train, educate, and mentor young and beginning commercial fishermen in sustainable fishing and business practices.

“Today’s action by the Senate is a big step forward in this vital push to enact legislation that will make a real difference for our young fishermen and New England’s fishing economies,” said John Pappalardo, CEO of The Cape Cod Commercial Fishermen’s Alliance, a member of the FCC. “We thank Senator Ed Markey for his leadership in guiding this bipartisan bill through the committee and are grateful for the strong support of Senator Elizabeth Warren.”

Learn more about the [\*Young Fishermen's Development Act\*](#).

<https://fishingcommunitiescoalition.org/news/2019/7/24/fcc-applauds-senate-commerce-committee-approval-of-young-fishermens-development-act>