

SPONSOR STATEMENT

House Bill 409

“An Act relating to the maximum length of salmon seine vessels; and providing for an effective date.”

[House Bill 409](#) removes the statutory prohibition for the length of salmon seine vessels and leaves the authority to the Alaska Board of Fisheries. It requires that a regulation of the Board of Fisheries to change salmon seine vessel length must be approved by at least 66 percent of the entry permit holders in the affected fishery. If the board adopts a new regulation, and in subsequent years they amend this regulation, fishermen who registered vessels under the previous rule will be grandfathered into the fishery.

This bill will put salmon seine vessels on the same footing as all other commercial fishing boats in the state. At present, the 58-foot limit on salmon seiners is the only length limit enshrined in statute. The length and size of all other fishing boats can be changed by the Board of Fisheries.

If the Board of Fisheries amends the regulation and lengthens the overall seine vessel length, owners of 58-foot vessels would not be required to purchase larger boats. The upgrade to a larger vessel would be optional.