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Governor Signs Order Creating State Food Working Group

Declares statewide call-to-action on food resource development

ANCHORAGE, Alaska (July 2, 2013) - Governor Parnell signed legislation calling for the creation of the Alaska Food Resource Working Group (AFRWG) under Administrative Order 265, with the goal of building Alaska's food economy.

As a response to House Concurrent Resolution 1, sponsored by Representative Bill Stoltze, the Governor signed the administrative order to establish a state agency work group focused on recommending policies and measures to increase the purchase and consumption of local wild seafood and farm products.

Alaskans spend approximately \$2.5 billion dollars on food each year, but only an estimated five percent of the food Alaskans buy is produced locally .

The AFRWG will be composed of eight (8) state agency Commissioners or designees responsible for the development, oversight, and marketing of locally grown and harvested foods. Increasing collaboration between State and local agencies, the University of Alaska, federal agencies, regional corporations, nonprofit organizations, and the Alaska Food Policy Council through the AFRWG will promote a healthy food system within the state.

"[AO 265] recognizes the importance to all Alaskans of developing a strong and secure food system that can provide jobs, support healthy communities, and increase food security to feed the hungry and insulate us from potential disruptions along the food supply chain," said Lisa Sadleir-Hart (Sitka), Governing Board Member of the Alaska Food Policy Council.

The Alaska Food Policy Council (AFPC) is an independent statewide organization with the

vision of a healthy, secure food system that feeds all Alaskans. Over 200 representatives from federal and state agencies, tribal entities, university programs, farmers, fisheries, food systems businesses, and health and hunger agencies serve on the AFPC to determine food policy opportunities to ensure a healthy, self-reliant, and prosperous Alaskan food system. A member of the AFPC Governing Board will serve on the AFRWG to represent the broader group of stakeholders on the Alaska Food Policy Council.

“The Alaska Food Policy Council really believes that the group created by this resolution will ultimately help to both bring Alaska’s rich food resources to market and address issues of access to healthy, nutritious, adequate supplies of food for all Alaskans,” declared Mary Sullivan of the Food Bank of Alaska and Alaska Food Policy Council Legislative Workgroup Chair.

By instituting programs and adopting regulations supporting a vibrant food economy in Alaska, the Alaska State Legislature and the Governor are facilitating momentous steps toward a food secure state. HCR1 and Administrative Order 265 demonstrate the commitment of Alaska’s government to the health, safety, welfare, and overall economic and social well-being of Alaskan residents.

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The Alaska Food Policy Council is an independent, statewide organization with a vision for a food secure, healthy Alaska. For more information about the Alaska Food Policy Council, please contact Sarra Khlifi by phone: (907)-793-8627 or e-mail: sarra@akcenter.org.