

# Alaska State Legislature

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**Senator Jerry Ward (R)**  
District E - Anchorage

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## **Ward Bill on Fish Labeling to Become Law**

(JUNEAU) – The House today, by a vote of 36-1, passed Senate Bill 208. Sponsored by Sen. Jerry Ward (R-Kenai), SB 208 would allow halibut and salmon products sold in Alaska to be labeled as “wild,” as well as, “antibiotic, hormone and dye free,” provided the fish is harvested from an ocean or river and had not been raised in captivity.

Ward’s bill will give Alaskan fishermen and processors one more tool to market their product. This has been a particular area of interest following Lt. Gov. Fran Ulmer’s earnest, but failed attempts to get the Federal Organic Standards Board to recognize Alaskan salmon as “organic.”

Another area of concern for Ward is the length fish farmers go to “color” fish, using artificial means to give their fish the deep red color of wild salmon.

“The fish farmers are almost all using hormones to get bigger fish, and artificial chemicals to hide the dull coloring of farm raised fish,” said Ward. “I think the people of Alaska have a right to know whether their fish is wild or chemically enhanced.”

Fishing organizations have reacted and praise for Ward’s efforts in getting this legislation passed.

“We are thrilled to see such support from the Alaska Legislature on such an important matter of food safety,” said Dale Kelly, executive director of the Alaska Trollers Association.

“It’s an idea that has been a long time coming,” said Chuck McCallum, executive director of the Chignik Seiners Association. “Labeling is a big thing in all consumer markets; people want to know what they are eating. I also think it will have a positive impact on our commercial fishing industry as well.”

Ward said this positive legislation will help our state’s second-largest-oldest industry, and will give consumers the ability to make informed decisions about what they eat. He said he is glad to see so much support and excitement over the bill’s passage.

SB 208 will go next to the governor’s office, where it is expected to be signed into law.

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