

# **The Keep Finfish Free Act of 2025**

**Lead Sponsors:** U.S. Senators Cory Booker (D-NJ) and Dan Sullivan (R-AK)

## **BACKGROUND**

Commercial finfish aquaculture, often with Atlantic salmon, utilizes infrastructure consisting of massive cages and intensive feeding systems. Commercial offshore cages typically contain hundreds of thousands of fish. The problems with salmon and other finfish aquaculture are similar to those with industrial animal agriculture on land, where pathogens are amplified because they thrive when many animals are confined in dense numbers. Aquaculture nets are porous and allow for waste and pathogens—viruses, bacteria, and parasites—to pass from farmed fish inside the cages to wild fish and shellfish outside the cages. Other adverse impacts from commercial finfish aquaculture include:

- Displacement of local fishermen and Indigenous peoples from their traditional fishing grounds by corporations, and harm to communities and families that depend on healthy wild fish stocks;
- The escape of farmed fish from their containment, leading to the spread of potentially deadly diseases and parasites to wild fish;
- The privatization of public ocean resources;
- The pollution of our oceans from the antibiotics and pesticides used in industrial aquaculture;
- Threats to marine life and marine ecosystems from the waste released from industrial aquaculture systems;
- The use of millions of pounds of wild fish to feed the caged fish at an unsustainable rate of consumption that depletes marine resources in traditional fishing areas.

## **SUMMARY**

The Keep Finfish Free Act would prohibit Federal agencies from issuing any permit or taking any other action to authorize or facilitate commercial finfish aquaculture operations in federal waters, known as the exclusive economic zone, from 3 to 200 nautical miles off U.S. shores, unless Congress passes future legislation explicitly authorizing such permits.