

# Senator Jesse Bjorkman

*Alaska State Legislature*

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## **SB 29 Big Game Commercial Services Board Version A Sponsor Statement**

Senate Bill 29 secures the executive administrator position to the Big Game Commercial Services Board in statute. This position is paid for by guide licensing fees and has been requested by the Big Game Commercial Services Board to make their work more efficient and cost effective. Guiding has many complex regulations. Designating a temporary position to concentrate on licensing functions, examinations and investigations is current practice and it is working well. Securing this position in statute adds assurance to the continuation of this effective process.

The Big Game Commercial Services Board plays an important role in the management of commercial game hunters in the interest of the State's wildlife resources. They fulfill this role by managing all hunting guide licensing functions, administering board meetings, assisting the board with maintaining and writing 29 written and practical exams, generating reports, and assisting Department of Commerce Community and Economic Development's Investigative Services and Department of Public Safety in game investigations.

New licensing examiners require extensive training, and with board members only serving 4 years, it seems like they depart as soon as they are up to speed. This has led to administrative errors that were highlighted in the recent audit of the Board. The Board was previously sharing an executive administrator with the Board of Marine Pilots to help address the workload. While this helped, the two boards were too complex. As a result, a temporary position was created in the FY24 and FY25 budgets to add this executive administrator using Designated General Funds paid for by guide licensing fees. This bill would continue using the same funding source and codify this position and its range into statute.

Savaya (465-2615) is the staff person assigned to this bill.