

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

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SB 207: Resident Hunt and Sport Fish License Exemption

"An Act relating to exemptions for a resident hunting and sport fishing license and to taking fish and game by proxy for a person with mental or physical disabilities."

For many Alaskans hunting and fishing are an honored tradition and way of life. Alaskans of all ages find great fulfillment while exploring the beautiful, wild spaces Alaska has to offer and sense of purpose in providing food for their families and community.

Senate Bill 207 seeks to preserve and improve access for a population who may experience difficulties securing the opportunity to experience Alaska's great outdoors. Specifically, SB 207 provides for free resident hunting and fishing licenses for individuals who have a mental or physical disability. The bill further allows for mentally disabled persons to have a proxy hunt or fish in their stead. This consideration is already provided for individuals who are physically disabled, blind, or 65+ years of age. Statute also currently allows for free resident hunting and fishing licenses for seniors (60+ y/o), disabled veterans, Alaska National Guard members, and Alaska Military Reserves members.

Many Alaskans, who have a significant physical or mental disability, already receive State or Federal services or financial assistance and it is estimated that individuals with disabilities are twice as likely to live in poverty as those without disabilities. Alaskans with physical and mental disabilities already face higher logistical and financial hurdles to participating in hunting and fishing activities. Senate Bill 207 is one step towards providing one less hurdle for Alaskans with disabilities to be able to participate in these traditional and enriching activities.

Thank you for your consideration of SB 207. I urge you to support this important legislation that will ensure that Alaskans with physical and mental disabilities can more readily enjoy hunting and fishing.