



**Representative Mia Costello**  
**Member, House Finance Committee**

**House Bill 158**

**Sponsor Statement**

*"An Act authorizing the commissioner of natural resources to implement a hunting guide concession program or otherwise limit the number of individuals authorized to conduct big game commercial guiding on state land."*

House Bill 158 provides statutory authority to the commissioner of the Department of Natural Resources to establish a guide concession area program.

A guide concession area program would allow the Department of Natural Resources to restrict the number of professional guides that can operate in particular areas. Currently, the department is not able to do this, and the result has been that certain high-demand hunting areas suffer from over-harvest, leading in turn to increased drawing hunts and fewer hunting opportunities for Alaska's resident hunters. A guide concession area program would enable the department to ensure a more suitable distribution of guide operations across state lands, and would allow the state to improve state land and game management for the benefit of Alaskans.

While the development of a guide concession area program has heretofore been carried out using fund provided in the operating budget, it has been the intent of the Legislature that implementation of any such program come under prior review by the Legislature to ensure a comprehensive evaluation. House Bill 158 ensures that this is accomplished as the bill moves through the legislative process.

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