

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

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SENATOR PETER A. MICCICHE

Sponsor Statement

DISTRICTS

Anchor Point

Clam Gulch

Cohoe

Diamond Ridge

Fox River

Fritz Creek

Funny River

Halibut Cove

Happy Valley

Homer

Kachemak City

Kachemak Selo

Kalifornsky

Kasilof

Kenai

Nikolaevsk

Ninilchik

Razdolna

Ridgeway

Seldovia

Soldotna

Voznesenka

SB 71 "An Act relating to the filing date for the final quarterly payment of, and to the assessment of penalties under, the fishery resource landing tax."

SB 71 has been introduced to repair glitches in the landing resource tax statutes and regulations that are requiring the payment of unfair penalties and interest by commercial fishermen.

Section 1 aligns the date that the resource landing tax is due with the date that the statewide average fish price report is released. Currently the tax is due before April 1st, however, the statewide average fish price report, which is calculated by the Department of Fish and Game, is not always out by then.

While the Department of Revenue does grant an automatic extension to file the landing tax return if the report has not been released at least 30 days prior to the due date, this does not extend the time for payment of the tax so penalties and interest can occur. (Last year, for example, the list for 2011 was not published until May 29, 2012.)

Section 2 of the legislation still maintains that you must pay at least 100% of last year's tax liability or at least 90% of the estimated amount owed but takes out the requirement for equal payments each quarter and lets commercial fishermen pay tax based on the earnings for the quarter. Depending on the fishery, the current statute requires payment of 50% of the landing taxes before they have even left the dock to go fishing.

I urge your support of this legislation, designed to bring efficiencies to both the fishermen and the department.