

March 4, 2015

The Honorable Louise Stutes
State Capitol Room 416
Juneau AK, 99801-1185

Dear Representative Stutes,

I would like to comment on your bill HB112. I own a Northern and Southern Spawn on Kelp Permit. I can attest to you and many other Northern SOK permit holders as well, we were sweating bullets listening to Board of Fish and ADF&G talking about taking away from us what we rightfully own and give it to another group. We were so close to losing our area. The issue is, a few of the Sitka Sac Roe Herring fisherman would like to be able to use their Sac Roe Permit to fish for Spawn on Kelp here in Sitka Sound (I own a Northern SOK that includes this area if it were ever to open a Spawn on Kelp fishery). However, during the Board meetings, a few guys from Sitka Sac Roe wine and dined (as we were told) the Board and convinced them that they have done extensive study and found a new market for SOK. I did some due diligence of my own and found out that there was not any "new market," it was the same market we already sell to and is constantly having too much on the market already and is dropping our prices down dramatically. They just lied to the board and the board bought into it completely. All I could do during the meeting was to watch and hear the Board and ADF&G try to give these guys our area. The board was really pushing for this to happen and Fish and Game agreed they could carve out an area in the Sitka Sac Roe and make it into a Spawn on Kelp Fishery for them. Thankfully, in the end, they check with legal and legal told them they would have to go to CFEC for this. So the board decided to hold off for a year and write a letter of recommendation to CFEC requesting that they give the Sitka Sac Roe guys an area for Spawn on Kelp.

I know there is some talk about doing away with CFEC and have ADF&G take the responsibility, but I have to tell you that CFEC is more legalistic than what ADF&G would be. Watching them here at the meetings, Fish and Game tried to do whatever the Board wants and not take too much of a stand. I feel, with our issue, ADF&G wouldn't care if we already own the permit; if the board wanted to change it and give to another group, ADF&G would do it. This is scary for all fishermen. It is important to the fishermen to keep CFEC in place. With CFEC at least we can rest assured that they will do what is right and legal and not give in to emotions. Fishermen *need* CFEC's protection.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Svenson", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Mike Svenson
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