



19 March 2015

Thank you Chairman Stoltze and members of the Senate State Affairs Committee. I appreciate you taking the time to listen from those in the commercial fishing sector and our voice on the Governor's appointments to positions which decide and determine the livelihoods of thousands and are paid for by commercial fishing fees and licenses.

My name is Martin Lunde and I am here on behalf of the Southeast Alaska Seiners Association, a commercial fishing gear group with offices just across the street in the Alaska Fishermen's Building, with over 150 paying skipper and crew memberships, as well as over 75 paying business members. SEAS represents the interests of roughly 1,500 fishermen in the S01A fishery, and their families and communities throughout SE Alaska and beyond.

The Southeast Alaska Seiners Association wholeheartedly implores you to support the re-appointment of Commissioner Ben Brown and appointment of Commissioner Verne Rupright to the Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission. Both of these individuals bring with them the particular experience, perspective, and job know-how that enables them to help conserve the fishery and serve the commercial fishing men and women of this state in the best way possible. Both Commissioner Brown and Commissioner Rupright have backgrounds in law, but much more than that, they have practical legal experience; and having been on the other side – in the 'real world' of maritime and fisheries law – they bring that proficiency and wisdom to the table when helping decide individual cases – each one unique – that affect occupations, businesses, families, and, indeed, whole communities.

SEAS
PO Box 23081
Juneau, AK 99802
907-463-5080



We take a dim view of the way in which the Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission has been portrayed in some corners, especially by those with personal vendettas, and want to encourage you to keep the politics out of any decisions regarding these appointments and hear the most important voice for whom this decision directly affects – the commercial fishing men and women of Alaska.

SEAS is uniquely positioned to comment and evaluate CFEC's job performance. Unlike some, who have used a snapshot in time to render judgment on an entire department's workings, The Southeast Alaska Seiners Association worked *for years* with the Commissioners and public servants of CFEC during the buyback of permits in the S01A fishery. This nearly decade long process, involving multiple parties, was, and continues to be, the only buyback program of its kind not simply in this state, or even in this country -- but in the world. And CFEC handled it all just as it had to be done: in an exhaustive and exemplary manner. Commissioners Brown and Rupright carry on the great work of past Commissioners, such as Frank Homan, Mary McDowell, and Peter Froehlich; and with buybacks in various fisheries in Cook Inlet, Bristol Bay, and Southeast on the horizon, this state *needs* their competence and expertise.

Simply put, Commissioners Brown and Rupright are very good at what they do. And as a representative of the permit holders who fund the Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission and pay their salaries – we couldn't think of better individuals to do this job. We encourage you to confirm both Commissioner Brown and Commissioner Rupright and do all that you can to help keep CFEC competent and independent.

Thank you for your time.

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