

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

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REPRESENTATIVE WES KELLER DISTRICT 10

SPONSOR STATEMENT

HB 177

"An Act relating to king salmon tags and king salmon tag designs."

Alaska, it is still the Land of mystery to millions of people. Almost anyone who has heard anything at all about Alaska are fascinated by the vastness of the state and our abundance of resources. Around the world Alaska salmon is considered the only premier salmon to eat. Alaska's Kings (Chinook) are some of the largest in the world and anglers come here every year just to hook one for the fight of their lives.

Alaska is also a place that has become well-known for unique and talented artists. In shops from Ketchikan to Fairbanks art is sold that was created in and funneled down from rural Alaska. HB 177 is an opportunity for us to take advantage of our king salmon resource and provide an opportunity for our artistic community at the same time.

HB 177 takes an existing program, the Alaska King Salmon angler authorization stamp and expands it into an annual artist event. It turns the salmon stamp into a piece of collectable art and provides an opportunity for posters and signed prints with proceeds potentially being funneled into the Department.

This bill will take a lesson from Alaska's Duck stamps. Opening the design from the current basic tag to something many will purchase even if they never wet a line or come to the state. HB 177 is an opportunity to seek alternative methods of funding for the continued advancement of our fish and game resource while promoting those resources around the world.