

From Richard Bishop. Below is my testimony to Senate Resources Committee on Wednesday, 3/22/17. Please include my testimony in the committee records. Thank you.

Madam Chair and committee members.

Thank you for this opportunity to participate. My name is Richard Bishop. I live in Fairbanks but today I'm calling in from Lake Minchumina where I once lived for a time and return seasonally to enjoy gathering wild food and the wild lands and visiting old friends.

I am testifying today on behalf of the Alaska Outdoor Council of which I am a long time member. The Alaska Outdoor Council opposes confirmation of Ms. Karen Linnell on the Board of Game. Due to her responsibilities in the Ahtna community Ms. Linnell has an intractable conflict of interest with the duties and obligations of an Alaska Board of Game member.

As Executive Director of Ahtna Inter-Tribal Resource Commission, in mid-January 2017, Ms. Linnell signed her approval to a Memorandum of Agreement between Ahtna and the Department of Interior. The Ahtna Commission is comprised of representatives from Ahtna, Inc., eight tribes and one village corporation.

The MOA anticipates establishing a new Federal-Ahtna cooperative structure under the Federal Subsistence Board for regulation of management and harvest allocation of moose, caribou, other game and fish on federal lands adjacent to lands of Ahtna, Inc. and the eight villages with tribal representation.

The new structure would basically cut out the State of Alaska's management, Board of Game, and state advisory committee structure and process on federal lands in the area, and could impair state management on adjacent state and private lands. Only token meaningless participation in the MOA proposal is offered to the State, with a caveat that the State would take no action on state and private lands that would conflict with MOA based decisions.

Allocation of harvests would favor tribal members of the eight villages in what amounts to a racial priority, on top of the existing Federal rural subsistence priority.

These goals of the Department of Interior and the Ahtna Inter-Tribal Resource Commission are substantially inconsistent with the State of Alaska's constitutional and statutory responsibilities and authority.

Ms. Linnell, as a publically declared proponent of the MOA has a fundamental conflict of interest in relation to the duties and obligations of a member of the Board of Game. The Alaska Outdoor Council urges the Alaska Legislature to deny confirmation of Ms. Linnell as an Alaska Board of Game member.