

Representative Andy Josephson,

I am writing in support of bill HB 105 "An Act establishing the Gordon Haber Denali Wolf Special Management Area."

Lately it appears the Federal government is bent on destroying much of America's natural wildlife. The reasons are very suspect for doing so. Here in Alaska, our state is embarrassing the great majority of its people by supporting a process which is termed "Intensive Wildlife Management". This seems to translate into: killing as much as possible of Alaska's natural predators in ways that are quite inhumane (gassing pups and cubs in dens, baiting and killing pregnant bear and wolf females, etc.) but only favour game hunters and trapping interests.

While purporting to increase ungulate populations of moose, for instance, this system of mass predator extermination fails to provide proof of its effectiveness over the decade or so it has been implemented. Alaska's Board of Game is made up solely of hunter-trappers and the governor and legislature continues to appoint only these consumptive-use people to the Board against the wishes of most Alaskans and what most Alaskans recognize as scientifically reliable programs.

The Board votes unanimously to block any improvements in trapping regulations and other efforts to balance consumptive wildlife use with non-consumptive uses like wildlife viewing, scientific study, natural ebbs and flows of wildlife numbers and photography tourism. The block unanimity voting of the Board suggests that no board member is necessarily "free" to voice his or her opinion, but may be pressured to retain strict obedience to the hunting-trapping dominated point of view.

It would be nice if legislators would consider what "Intensive Wildlife Management" implies and question why the standard operating procedures of the BOG and wildlife authorities is not simply "Wildlife Management" as it should be. In particular, the Denali Buffer Zone should be instated to protect the economically viable wildlife viewing opportunities that brings tourists and tourist dollars to Alaska.

Thank you.

Ken Green

Dear Representative Andy Josephson

I support H.B. 105 to establish a no hunt/no trap buffer zone around Denali National Park. I have driven tour bus into Denali National Park for at least 9 years. I personally observed the decline of wolf viewings when the buffer zone was eliminated several years ago. With the buffer zone my passengers saw wolves once every 2 weeks. Nowadays I say passengers are lucky to see wolves during the summer, maybe 2 times. The buffer zone needs to be reestablished. A major portion of the state of Alaska's income is tourism. If we do not protect our wildlife, and wolves in particular, tourism will suffer. I encourage you to pass H.B. 105.

Sincerely,

Dana Durham

Rep. Josephson:

I am in support of HB 105, regarding the Denali Wolf Management Area. I have been a tour guide in Alaska for over 30 years and have spent many years working and playing in Denali National Park. When visitors come to Alaska, they are able to see our beautiful scenery, but they are also hoping to see our amazing wildlife. Most visitors that travel into Alaska's interior visit Denali National Park. They hope to see moose and bears, which they have a good chance at seeing. But the visitors are also greatly hoping to see a wolf. Denali National Park is where the visitors have the best chance of viewing a wild wolf. To some guests, this would be the highlight of their Alaska vacation. It is an experience they will never forget. To see a wolf in the wild shows how incredible Alaska's wilderness is.

In the past, visitors to Denali had a reasonable chance to see a wolf. But since the Board of Game removed the buffer zone northeast of the park, the Denali wolf population has dropped dramatically and the chance to see a wolf has also decreased immensely. Guests are disappointed when they don't see a wolf. For most people, this was their only chance in their lifetime to see a wild wolf and Alaska let them down.

Unfortunately, the Denali wolves don't know when they have crossed outside of the park boundary. The few wolf trappers in the Stampede Corridor are having a tremendous impact on thousands and thousands of tourists and Alaskans who will no longer have the great opportunity to view a wild wolf. And regulations also need to be addressed so wolves are not drawn into the bait stations for other animals.

In the past, I have been lucky enough to view and hike with wolves in Denali National Park. I will never forget looking into the eyes of those incredible animals. I hope other people will also be able to experience this. Please help protect Denali's wolves by establishing a no hunting or trapping zone in honor of Gordon Haber who did so much for Denali's wolves.

Please include my comments with this bill as it makes its way through committee. Thank you for sponsoring this bill and for your continued support of Alaska's wildlife.

Karen Walker

I strongly support your bill, HB 105, creation of the Gordon Haber Denali Wolf Special Management Area, a buffer zone near the border of Denali National Park where wolves may not be hunted.

We simply cannot afford to allow removal of wolves that might be seen by visitors to Denali National Park. Those wolves are a national treasure.

Thank you for this bill. Please let me know what I can do to help get it passed.

I moved to Alaska in 1981 and have been a supervoter ever since.

Sincerely,

Gail Heineman