

Dear House Finance Committee Members:

I am an ADF&G fishery biologist and writing here on my own behalf and not that of the Dept.

I support HB 23 to provide for the families of Peace Officers and Firefighters who die in the line of duty.

However, there is a missing piece in this legislation that I would ask you to address by amending the bill to add ADF&G personnel who die in the line of duty to Peace Officers and Fire Fighters.

More ADFG staff (27) have died conducting field operations than any other state agency, including the troopers (16), due to the extensive time field personnel spend in aircraft, on the water, and under the water. I invite you to visit the memorial plaque of ADF&G staff who died in the line of duty at ADF&G headquarters.

Dangerous work in boats, diving, and aircraft is a routine part of their work duties to maintain and sustain the fish and game populations in Alaska that Alaskans rely on for food and livelihoods.

Thank you for your consideration.

Mark Stopha  
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