

Alaska State Legislature

Dear Legislators;

re: HB 263

Please support HB 263.

This bill fixes an oversight when AS 08.54.790 (12) was enacted.

Water taxis were not included probably because there were few, if any, at the time these statutes were enacted.

Water taxis provide simple transportation, nothing else, same as air services, and should be included in this provision.

I'd like to thank Rep Knopp and the sponsors of this bill.

I urge your support of HB 263.

Respectfully,

Mako Haggerty

Mako's Water Taxi

Homer, Alaska



unapologetically **FOR ALASKAN RESIDENTS**

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January 27, 2018

To: Representative Gary Knopp

Re: HB 263 – Transportation Services for Hunters

Dear Representative Knopp,

Resident Hunters of Alaska (RHAK) is in full **support** of HB 263 as currently worded to create an exemption for water-taxi operators from the transporter licensing and regulations that fall under Title 8 of the Big Game Commercial Services Board (BGCSB) statutes. This would be the exact same exemption already provided to air-taxis who carry hunters as an incidental part of their business.

I have served for the last two years as a member of the Transporter sub-committee on the BGCSB, representing RHAK. There are some on the sub-committee, including myself, who question the overall transporter requirements for air-taxis and water-taxis.

The FAA licenses and regulates air-taxis, and the Coast Guard licenses and regulates water-taxis. A Part 135 air-taxi that operates under the current exemptions to provide transportation services to big game hunters without holding a transporter license is no more or less qualified, or less safe, than flying with an air-taxi that holds a transporter license. The same would be true for water-taxis with the same exemption.

Currently if you run a water-taxi business without holding a transporter license, if a customer shows up with a rifle and says he wants you to take him across the bay to hunt, that operator cannot legally take him, even if transporting hunters is an incidental part of the overall clientele. There is no valid reason for this requirement to hold a transporter license to accept customers (hunters) who are an incidental part of a transportation service.

RHAK wants all hunters to have access to the field, whether by air or water, by commercially licensed operators regulated by the FAA and Coast Guard. The state should not be involved in telling these operators that they need yet another license and more regulations to transport one certain class of clientele.

These onerous transporter requirements do not apply if an air or water-taxi is transporting fishermen, rafters, backpackers etc; it only applies to hunters. Why? What is the real reason for the transporter requirements under the authority of the board that licenses and regulates big game guides? Why is the state telling businesses regulated and licensed by the FAA and Coast Guard they can't advertise that they transport hunters unless they hold a transporter license? Why is the state telling any business how much they can charge customers in our free-market system?

Any concerns of hunter crowding, hunter conflicts afield, or conservation concerns for wildlife populations are the sole authority of the Board of Game to address.

Thank you,

Mark Richards – Executive Director Resident Hunters of Alaska