



unapologetically **FOR ALASKAN RESIDENTS**

PO Box 60095, Fairbanks, Alaska 99706 (907) 371-7436
email info@residenthuntersofalaska.org web www.residenthuntersofalaska.org

January 23, 2017

To: House Judiciary Committee

Re: HB 42 – FORFEITURE & SEIZURE: PROCEDURE; LIMITS

Dear Chairman Claman, Vice-chair Fansler, and members of the House Judiciary Committee,

Resident Hunters of Alaska (RHAK) **supports** HB 42 to reform our civil asset forfeiture laws. We are aware of cases where hunters have been accused of hunting violations and had assets such as aircraft, weapons, boats, all-terrain vehicles etc., seized by law enforcement agencies prior to the case making its way through the court system. The loss of the use of those assets while the case makes it way through the courts is punitive, and in those cases where the individual was found innocent it still often costs thousands of dollars to recover those seized assets.

We understand and respect the need of our law enforcement agencies, in particular the Alaska Wildlife Troopers, to receive adequate funding in order to enforce our laws. However, there has always been a conflict in using seized assets to fund law enforcement agencies in that such a system can be abused and end up harming innocent individuals.

We need a better process in place so that “probable cause” alone does not result in the seizure of assets, and a process whereby individuals not convicted of a crime, who have had assets seized, can reclaim their property without undue expense and time.

Thank you for your consideration of this bill.

Sincerely,

Mark Richards

Executive Director - Resident Hunters of Alaska