

Kodiak Seiners Association

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House Resources Committee

Representatives Geran Tarr and Andy Josephson, Co-Chairs

Alaska State Legislature

RE:HB35 – Conflict of Interest: BD Fisheries/Games

Dear Committee members,

The Kodiak Seiners Association (KSA) supports HB35, which would allow members of the Board of Fisheries to deliberate, but not vote, on matters for which they have been determined to have a conflict of interest. We believe that the current policy unnecessarily restricts board members from participating in the deliberative process and that conflicted board members should be allowed to provide their wisdom and expertise on any issue. Excluding conflicted members from deliberation often isolates the remaining board members from critical information.

Board members are typically selected for their knowledge, wisdom, and integrity. The deliberation of a conflicted member may be guided by their personal self-interest; however, the deliberative process is even more tainted by the excluding critical knowledge that would otherwise be unavailable to the remaining board members. To be clear, we do not believe that conflicted board members should be permitted to cast a vote, but they should be allowed to provide the voting members with essential information during deliberation so they may make their decisions based on the best available information.

The Kodiak Seiners Association is an advocacy group representing 70 permit holders and active commercial fishing vessels operating in the Kodiak Management Area.

Sincerely,

Nate Rose, President, Kodiak Seiners Association