



Southeast Alaska Guides Organization

February 12, 2020

The Honorable Louise Stutes
House Special Committee on Fisheries
State Capitol Building, Room 406
Juneau, AK 99801

Re: HB 218 Guide and Operator Licensing

Dear Representative Stutes,

Southeast Alaska Guides Organization (SEAGO) is a non-profit entity representing the interests of fishing charter and lodge operations across Southeast, Alaska. We promote sustainable fisheries and fair management with the goal of a healthy recreational fishing industry that benefits Alaskans and our nation.

We support Governor Dunleavy's House Bill 218, reauthorizing collection of guide and operator licensing fees to fund the registration and logbook programs.

Understanding fishing business activity and recreational harvest is critical to the state's management of our fisheries, and in fulfilling accounting and reporting obligations to the Pacific Salmon and International Halibut treaties. Logbooks are essentially real-time tools that can help inform in-season management, and more reliable accounting.

Given the department's budget constraints, we support a registration and logbook program that is cost-neutral to the state, and borne by businesses participating in the fishery. We do expect all funds collected from guides and operators to be used for the sole purpose of running this program, and that the program will be as streamlined and cost effective as practicable. As the program moves from labor intensive manual data entry toward electronic logbook reporting, we hope that any eventual savings will reduce future guide and operator licensing fees.

Respectfully,

Forrest Braden
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