

Alaska State Legislature

House Fisheries Committee

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Representative Andi Story

Representative Dan Ortiz

Representative Sarah Vance

Representative Kevin McCabe

HOUSE BILL 26**Version A**

"An Act relating to participation in matters before the Board of Fisheries and the Board of Game by the members of the respective boards; and providing for an effective date."

SPONSOR STATEMENT

(Revised 3.12.21)

House Bill 26 will improve the Board of Fish and the Board of Game process by allowing members who have personal knowledge of a matter that comes before the boards to participate in deliberations. This bill will allow someone who has a conflict of interest, as determined by the Executive Branch Ethics act, to deliberate on a matter before the Boards of Fish or Game, but not vote.

Currently, if a member of the Boards of Fish or Game, or their immediate family member, has a personal or financial interest in a matter or proposal being considered by the board they are not allowed to participate in the board discussion of the matter. House Bill 26 will fix this and allow members who have a conflict of interest to contribute valuable information and perspective to the discussion, but not vote on the proposal or topic being considered.

Board of Fish and Game members are currently required to divulge a conflict of interest if they, or their immediate family members, are involved in the subject being deliberated on. At this time, the members with a conflict of interest cannot offer input on the process and cannot vote on the matter at hand. This bill allows the conflicted member to offer remarks and input, but still precludes them from voting on the issue at hand or on whether they have a conflict of interest.

Allowing members with expertise in particular fields to deliberate will help the boards make more informed decisions, will result in stronger resource management statewide, and align the process with the original intent of allowing boards to benefit from members sharing their knowledge and viewpoints on subjects being consider by the board.

Please contact the Fisheries Committee Aide, Thatcher Brouwer, with questions at 465-6007.