

Chairman Josiah Patkotak and (H)RES Committee members,

The Alaska Outdoor Council (AOC) does not support passage of HB26. There is no justification for allowing AK Board of Fisheries or Game members to participate in the deliberation of proposals that they have a financial interest in.

The only ones that would benefit from such a breach of the current Executive Branch Ethics Act (AS 39.52) would be those with a commercial interest who would hope to gain a larger allocation of fish or game to harvest by having one more opportunity to plead their case.

Having personally participated in Ak Board of Fisheries & Game meetings, representing AOC, for the last 40 years my experience tells me there would be no gain in transparency or public support for the board process by allowing conflicted members to continue arguing their position during board deliberations prior to the vote on the proposals. The opportunities for the public, AK Fish&Game Advisory Committee members, ADF&G staff, DOL attorneys, Fish&Wildlife protect officers, representatives of NGOs and individuals who submitted proposals, and board members to share information/data prior to the board's deliberating on proposals is virtually unlimited.

Days of meetings where Department staff reports and public oral testimony take place before the boards start deliberations gives all interested parties a chance to share information.

AOC asks that the House Resources Committee do not pass HB26 out of committee for the sake of legitimizing the AK Board of Fisheries and Game regulatory process. HB26 if passed into law would not bolster the public's confidence in the board's process.

Thank you for your consideration,
Rod Arno. Palmer, Alaska
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