

# KENAI LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION OFFICE

Email: [Kenai\\_LIO@akleg.gov](mailto:Kenai_LIO@akleg.gov)

Phone: 907-283-2030 / Fax: 907-283-3075

## WRITTEN TESTIMONY

NAME: Roni Carmon  
REPRESENTING: Self  
BILL # or SUBJECT: HB 79  
COMMITTEE: SRES DATE: 1-26-2022

At this time, the legislators need to raise the licensing fee of guides, charter boats, and lodges. The fish is a natural resource. And the state receives nothing for that resource.

Oil is a resource, and oil companies pay the state for the resource.

The guides that are out of state need to pay more. The resource salmon sell for thirty dollars a lb.

And the state gives away that salmon resource! To promote tourism! But tourism pays nothing, to the state. Other than sales tax.

How crazy is this?

Commercial fishing supplied 140 million a year to the general fund. The state ADFG stole these funds for their own gain. Commissioner Vincent-Lang, he represents coastal conservation, and him and the board of fish both are controlled and paid for by lobbyists and politicians.

This is a globalist agenda.

You see the proof of my statement. Unlicensed guides and charter boats received 110-thousand-dollar care checks, just last month.

Licensed Cook Inlet fisherman received 3800-dollar checks.

The state legislatures are as corrupt as Lisa, Dan, and Don Young.

HB79

### **Public Comment**

Josh Hayes

Alaska Trout Guides - Owner Operator

### **ADFG Licensing Requirements**

I have some reservations regarding HB79 as currently written.

Simply paying an insurance premium and holding an insurance binder does not denote a professional in any industry. In the event the State of Alaska believes the Fishing Guide/Charter industry can be professionalized by simply providing an insurance binder and current First Aid/CPR Certification it is sadly mistaken. Perhaps it is time that the State of Alaska put similar requirements on the guided sport fishing industry as they do the big game guide industry. If all fishing guides/charter businesses and guides are to pay to play it stands to reason there should be regulatory requirements that express aptitude, proficiency, local experience, and professionalism from each licensed individual. Potential fishing guides/charter operators need to be properly vetted with comprehensive background checks at a minimum.

### **Regarding the increase in statewide fishing guide license fees for all Sport Fishing Guides;**

I oppose a blanket fee schedule applied to the entire state. Currently Kenai River Guides are the ONLY sport fishing guides charged a state permit fee within the entire State of Alaska.

Licensed Kenai River guides pay \$1000.00 USD to the State of Alaska per guide annually.

Ex: If a business owner has three (3) guides the owner is charged \$3000.00 USD by the State of Alaska.

In addition to permit fees licensed Kenai River guides are required to pay boat launch fees of a minimum \$20/day and/or purchase an annual pass\* of \$75.00 USD per vessel/trailer to the State of Alaska.

*\*Two of the Kenai River Boat Launches operated by the State of Alaska (Eagle Rock, Pillars) on the Lower Kenai River are NOT included in annual pass access, thus resulting in mandatory additional daily operational fees for launching or recovery of vessels at the only boat launches operated by The State of Alaska in the lower reaches of the river.*

Licensed Kenai River guides are required by regulation to attend and pass the Kenai River Guide Academy - an accredited college course within the University of Alaska system paid for by each potential guide. Included in this process, above and beyond the classroom time, is a written exam covering (but not limited to) Alaska history, wildlife biology, anthropology, entomology, hydrology, geology, state and federal regulations, Alaska Board of Fish Processes, safety, Alaska Fisheries Management processes,

administration processes of various agencies, licensing requirements for federal/state agencies (DNR, ADFG, USCG, DOI – USFW, National Forest) and Alaska Native Corporations. Once the written exam is satisfactorily passed the applicant is then subjected to an Oral Exam consisting of a number of questions administered by a board consisting of individuals representing interested government agencies, policy makers, and senior professional guides. Potential guides must pass both prior to potentially being licensed by Alaska State Parks.

Kenai River Guides sign and commit to adhering to additional “Guide Stipulations” specific to the Kenai River Special Management Area that additionally limit operational actions, opportunity, and the access of guides and guided sport anglers to various state owned/operated areas.

All Kenai River Guides submit to a preseason Drug Screening and if licensed by the USCG participate in a random drug test program throughout the year.

Due to lack of options Kenai River Guides have been forced to accept a “Pay to Play” atmosphere with the State of Alaska. I feel strongly that all guides throughout the State of Alaska should pay, at a minimum, the operational costs for the fishery in which they are participating. Conversely, the Kenai River Guides, whom are already disproportionately charged by the State of Alaska to operate, should not be levied more of the burden for fisheries in which they do not participate.

Logbooks, a requirement for sport fishing saltwater charters and guides do require financial support from both state and federal agencies. In the event the state agencies require additional funding to administer and enforce logbooks, the funding should be sought through the levying of fees on those user groups participating in the fishery - user groups including all those executing the fishery (sport, personal, and commercial). Due to the logbooks, and similarly commercial fish tickets being utilized to exhibit allocational value in an area, the requirement to financially support the implementation and enforcement of logbooks, as well as commercial fish tickets, falls squarely on the entire fleet operating in the specific area denoted in federal and/or state regulatory guidelines.

According to the study published, **Fishery Data Series No. 16-02 - Participation, Effort, and Harvest in the Sport Fish Business/Guide Licensing and Logbook Programs, 2014 By Bob Powers and Dora Sigurdsson**, there were 2788 licensed guides in the State of Alaska in 2014. Of those 2788 statewide licensed sport fishing guides, 691 were listed as saltwater sport fishing guides located in Southeast Alaska. The data bears to reason that due to the needs/requirements of 691 licensed saltwater operators/guides in Southeast Alaska, the remaining 2097 licensed sport fishing guides in the State of Alaska are to be burdened with additional costs in the form of increased licensing fees. This additional cost coming at time when Southcentral Alaska (1158 registered sport fishing guides in 2014) has experienced natural disasters in the way of wildfires and poor fish returns. Coupled with the natural disasters, the previous two years of Covid 19 travel restrictions by Canada, Europe, Asia, and multiple U.S. States/territories have adversely affected guided sport fishery participation by nonresidents – traditionally the largest percentage of participants within the industry.

Licensed Kenai River Guides/Operators have been required to pay their own way for decades. I do believe it is time that all user groups throughout the State of Alaska bear the same burden, but it is imperative that the financial obligation associated with such endeavors is cast without levying additional financial burden on those already carrying their own weight.

I feel that a sincere look and revision of the current bill HB79 as written is in order. Thank you for your efforts and consideration.

Sincerely,

Josh Hayes