



unapologetically **FOR ALASKAN RESIDENTS**

PO Box 60095, Fairbanks, Alaska 99706 (907) 371-7436
email info@residenthuntersofalaska.org web www.residenthuntersofalaska.org

March 14, 2022

To: Senate Resources Committee

Re: SB 204 – Hunting Permit/Tag Auctions/Raffles

Dear Chairman Revak and members of the Resources Committee,

Resident Hunters of Alaska (RHAK) supports ways to bring in more revenues to the Division of Wildlife Conservation, but we have concerns with SB 204.

We especially have concerns with any increase in the number of Dall sheep Governor's tags at this time when sheep populations across the state are in significant decline, sheep draw permit allocations are decreasing, one of last year's Governor sheep tags was pulled due to these declines, and the Board of Game is still unwilling to limit nonresident sheep hunters in areas of the state where we have significant declines.

Governor tags don't generally fall within the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation of a user-pay system whereby the common man and woman have an equal opportunity to hunt, which is why they are typically very limited. However, other states have significantly increased the number of Governor tags to better fund their Fish and Game departments, which has resulted in a significant loss of permits and hunting opportunities to resident hunters. We do not want to see any increase in Governor tags in future, beyond what this bill asks for now.

RHAK has been participating in the governor tag program for several years. We give back to the Division of Wildlife Conservation 70 percent of the revenues raised from the auction or raffle of these tags and retain 30 percent, which we utilize according to our cooperative agreement with the Department for hunter education seminars and R3 efforts to recruit, retain, and reactivate hunters (links to some RHAK seminars conducted with revenues raised from Governor tags are below¹). Of course, we apply, as other orgs do, for the most coveted tags, typically the sheep and bison tags. But we have never been awarded a sheep or bison tag. And frankly likely never will be awarded one of those coveted tags because our organization, based solely in Alaska, is focused on resident hunting opportunities, and we cannot bring in the dollars that the national

¹ RHAK Sheep Hunting Seminar

Hosted by Brad Sparks. Panel with Matt DeLuca, Scott Luber, Bob Cassell, and ADF&G biologist Tom Lohuis.

Part 1 - [Expert advice on location, gear, and preparing for the hunt](#)

Part 2 - [How to judge legal rams, how to hunt rams, where to hunt](#)

RHAK Bear Baiting Clinic

Download the [PowerPoint presentation](#)

Watch the presentation by ADF&G biologist Sean Farley <https://youtu.be/AFSlwJ3V87E>

Watch the panel discussion <https://youtu.be/UGGpb8CWIQ8>

organizations that hold their banquets in the lower-48 and who cater to nonresident hunters can bring in.

The Department has been conducting and sponsoring a “Super Seven Raffle” of certain Governor tags the past two years, but RHAK has been shut out from participating in that program, whereby all the involved organizations evenly split the total money raised as part of the 30 percent of funds they can retain for hunter education or other efforts per agreements with the Department.

We would like to see some type of guidelines for parity among the organizations that apply for Governor tags. All organizations in the program should be able to receive a Dall sheep or bison tag at some point. All organizations should be able to participate in any Department-sponsored Governor tag raffle program.

In closing, again, we support ways to increase funding to the Department but have concerns for SB 204 as written,

Sincerely,

Mark Richards

Executive Director Resident Hunters of Alaska (RHAK)

PS: RHAK has outlined to ADF&G Commissioner Doug Vincent-Lang and DWC Director Eddie Grasser other legislative means to increase funding to the Department, and we’d be happy to discuss these ideas with the Resources Committee.