

10 March, 2026

Re HB 295 PFD ELIGIBILITY; PILOT ALLOWABLE ABSENCE

Chair Ashley Carrick members of the House State Affairs Committee.

Good day.

Fundamentally I am opposed to HB 93. I am also opposed to HB 295.

HB 295 will only be the start of many other occupations that Alaskans have chosen. That require them to be absent from the state. Those residents will want their exemption as in HB 295.

There are bills in the legislature to ban trawling with in state waters. Let me emphasize “state waters”.

Some Alaskan residents/families have chosen to be trawler. Many residents and their families participate in trawler opportunities that are outside state waters (3-mile limit). Every day they spend outside the state 3-mile limit, is a day absent from the state. Many of these opportunities last for several months. Resident trawlers could even spend more time absent from Alaska if the legislature bans trawling within state 3-mile limit.

Resident Alaskan trawlers could be unnecessarily and unintentional lose their ability to purchase a resident hunting, trapping, fishing license, because of their occupation and legislative action.

I would ask the Committee to hold this bill, until there has been a review of Alaskan occupations that could unnecessarily and unintentional effect their ability to purchase resident hunting, trapping, and fishing license.

For fun, I wrote the next House Bill sponsor statement for trawlers, as an example.

House Bill xxx makes a targeted update to Alaska’s Permanent Fund Dividend (PFD) allowable absence statute to ensure that true Alaska residents do not jeopardize their resident status, including their right to hunt, trap and fish as residents, simply because their profession requires extended travel outside the state.

Current law allows residents to remain eligible for the PFD while absent for approved reasons such as military service, education, or medical treatment. However, certain employment-driven absences are not clearly addressed. HB xxx adds the occupation Alaskan residents who are licensed trawlers or crew members, as an allowable absence.

Alaskan trawlers may spend substantial time outside Alaska for work, yet many maintain their permanent home, vote, pay taxes, raise their families, and intend to remain in this state. Their absence is occupational, not residential.

This bill does not expand eligibility or weaken residency standards. It clarifies that Alaska-resident trawlers who maintain domicile and intent to remain residents do not lose their status because they fish outside the 3-mile state waters or the legislature has ban trawling within state waters.

No Alaskan should lose their resident hunting and fishing rights because their career requires temporary travel Outside. HB xxx makes that principle clear in statute, and the dividend protection follows naturally from that clarification.

Thank you for the time to hear my concerns with this bill.

Al Barrette

380 Peger Rd.

Fairbanks, Ak 99709

907-460-7611