

Blair Hickson letters of Opposition

Dear members of the House Fisheries Committee:

My name is Connor Murphy and like many lifelong Alaskans, the Board of Fisheries process directly impacts my livelihood, my ability to access wild protein, and my community's economic well-being. I am writing this letter to express my support for and concerns about the upcoming Board of Fisheries appointees

It is imperative that all users, and communities are fairly represented during the Board of Fisheries and that membership remains balanced across the board. This ensures the public process is transparent, operates with integrity, and prevents the board's influence from being overwhelmed by a dominant interest or agenda. The current Board's majority membership does not fairly represent coastal communities or commercial users. Its most recent actions are clearly reflecting an agenda to dismantle commercial fisheries, disregarding the impacts on commercial users and coastal communities across the state. For this reason I encourage you to appoint Paul Cyr from Ketchikan with his well rounded background in South East fisheries and reappoint Mike Wood for his background in the Cook Inlet set net fishery to help achieve a fair representation on the Board of Fisheries.

I want to note that this critically important public board process—which impacts countless people and communities across the state- does not include an active commercial fisherman whose primary income is sourced from commercial fishing. Furthermore, only one out of the seven current board members is from a coastal fishing community. The current membership does not fairly represent the coastal fishing communities or the commercial users who rely on the resource, these are arguably the most impacted by the board's decisions.

Therefore, I request that you reject Blair Hickson's appointment and only appoint members who reside in coastal fishing communities or have backgrounds in commercial fisheries at this time. This will help the Board achieve the transparency and a balanced membership again, as this public process was intended to.

Sincerely,

Connor T. Murphy

Kodiak, AK
