

Dear Representative Stutes and members of the House Fisheries Committee,

My name is Jane Petrich and I am writing in support of HB 117.

I have been set netting on the west side of Kodiak Island since 1977. I started out fishing a single permit with my husband but as our family grew to include three sons we started purchasing additional permits. My family now owns and operates 7 permits in a very cooperative operation. I was 30 when I bought my first permit and now I am 75. The physical demands of setnetting mean that I do not go out on the nets for every pick and delivery like I did 45 years ago but I do have 45 years of experience to share with my sons, daughter in laws and grandchildren. I am the main net mender of our operation, I cook and feed the crew, I mentor the grandchildren and teach them how to safely operate skiffs and maintain outboards. I know the regs and make sure we are in compliance with all regulations. I have spent every summer since 1977 in Larsen Bay participating in the setnet fishery.

Last summer (2024) a State Attorney determined that the way my family has been fishing is not legal. That to prove to the State that I am a legitimate permit owner and participant in the fishery I must get in the skiff and be present at the tender when deliveries are made. Additionally the Attorney determined that each of our 7 permits are to be fished as a single isolated unit. Basically the interpretation by this attorney will put my family out of business after 45 years.

We are holding on to our fishing operation by our fingernails in this very chaotic and uncertain times for the fisheries. We are very much committed to continuing our family operation for the next generation but unless this situation is resolved we will not survive.

This legislation is a straightforward way to clear up inconsistencies between regulation and practice and get ADF&G the information they need, while still allowing the positives for the fishery.

Thank you for working to help solve this problem that has arisen. The fishing families of Alaska needs your help.

Sincerely,
Jane Petrich, Kodiak Island