

Calvin Zuelow

From: Forest Jenkins <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, March 24, 2025 2:30 PM
To: House Resources
Subject: Comment on HB 117 from PWS Setnetters' Association

My name is Forest Jenkins. I am the President of the Prince William Sound Setnetters' Association. I would like to provide written testimony on HB 117.

I would like to speak in favor of some form of this bill passing to ensure the traditional cooperative ways of setnetting are not jeopardized across the state. In addition, it seems essential to get this clarified so our user group is not penalized with tickets due to a new interpretation of the law.

I will speak in opposition to the suggested number of setnet permits to be allowed to be fished cooperatively. Although I understand setnet operations differ greatly around the state, 10 permits seems excessive. I think this sets a precedent statewide for all fisheries and encourages monopolization of our fisheries. Why can't these large cooperative groups in other districts use multiple smaller cooperatives to find the same solution, while avoiding a bad precedent and a potential negative impact on other small fisheries around the state. The Eshamy District in the Prince William Sound is a 12 mile district home to one of the smallest fisheries in the state. With less than 30 active setnet permits fished in this district, allowing 10 permits to coop could have detrimental effects on our small fishery. I also have concerns of this being pushed to the Board of Fisheries level to determine the number of permits. I feel the best solution is to set a statewide number around 2-3 permits. Allowing this to take place at the Board of Fisheries could cause unnecessary burden every cycle where proposals could be repeatedly submitted to alter the number. It also could set a precedent to allow cooperations in other fisheries that historically were not cooperative fisheries like setnetting.

The ultimate goal should be to preserve the cooperative nature of traditional setnet fisheries around the state and clarify this in regulation, while also avoiding the many unforeseen consequences of setting this number of permits too high.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Feel free to reach out with questions or to seek further discussion on HB 117 at any time.

Best regards,
Forest Jenkins

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Sent from my iPhone