

# ASSOCIATION OF VILLAGE COUNCIL PRESIDENTS

Thaddeus Tikiun Jr., Chairperson | Vivian Korthuis, CEO | AVCP.org



## Administration

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March 25, 2025

The Honorable Nellie Jimmie  
Lower Kuskokwim  
District 38 State Representative  
Alaska State Legislature  
Juneau, Alaska  
E: Keenan.miller@akleg.gov

The Honorable Louise Stutes  
Chair  
House Committee on Fisheries  
Alaska State Legislature  
Juneau, Alaska  
E: Representative.Louise.Stutes@akleg.gov

House Speaker Bryce Edgmon  
Vice Chair  
House Committee on Fisheries  
Alaska State Legislature  
Juneau, Alaska  
E: Rep.Bryce.Edgmon@akleg.gov

RE: House Bill 125

Transmitted via email.

Dear Representative Jimmie, Chair Stutes, Vice Chair Speaker Edgmon, Members of the House Special Committee on Fisheries,

On behalf of the Association of Village Council President (AVCP), representing 56 tribes in the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Region, we write in support of House Bill 125. This legislation is a critical step toward ensuring equity and fairness for Alaska's subsistence users, the original stewards of the land and waters.

Our Tribal members have harvested food from the lands and waters of the Arctic-Yukon-Kuskokwim Region since time immemorial, utilizing our traditional harvest methods to feed our families and communities. This practice, now called "subsistence" for the purpose of regulating traditional harvest activity, is the core of identity, food security, and cultural expression among Tribal communities in rural Alaska. Subsistence voices have too often been marginalized in decision-making processes that directly affect our ability to live in accordance with our traditions and values.

HB 125, "An Act relating to membership of the Board of Fisheries," addresses this long-standing inequity by ensuring that subsistence users have a guaranteed seat at the table. The proposed structure, with designated representation for commercial, sport, and subsistence interests, alongside scientific expertise, reflects a more balanced and just approach to fisheries governance. Ensuring seats specifically designated for subsistence users will ensure that decisions are informed by traditional knowledge and the lived realities

Nunaput umyuallgutkut pinirluteng-llu, Tegganerput qigcikliki pirkakluki-llu, ayagyuaput-llu ciuliqagcimaut yuuyarakun.

Our Tribes are united and strong, our Elders are respected and valued, and our youth are guided by Yuuyaraq.

Akiachak, Akiak, Alakanuk, Andreafski, Aniak, Almaulluak, Belhel, Bill Moore's St., Cheforak, Chevak, Chuathbaluk, Chuloonawick, Crooked Creek, Eek, Emmonak, Georgetown, Goodnews Bay, Hamilton, Hooper Bay, Lower Kalskag, Upper Kalskag, Kasigluk, Kipnuk, Kongiganak, Kollik, Kwethluk, Kwigillingok, Lime Village, Marshall, Mekoryuk, Mln. Village, Napaimute, Napakiak, Napaskiak, Newtok, Nightmute, Nunakauyak, Nunam Iqua, Nunapitchuk, Ohogamiut, Oscarville, Paimiut, Pilot Station, Pitka's Point, Platinum, Quinhagak, Red Devil, Russian Mission, Scammon Bay, Sleetmute, St. Mary's, Stony River, Tuluksak, Tuntutuliak, Tununak, Umkumiut

of rural Alaskans.

We believe that equitable representation of subsistence users is not only a matter of fairness but also essential for sustainable fisheries management. Policies that fail to prioritize those who depend on these resources for food security and cultural survival are policies that fail Alaska. This bill moves us closer to a governance structure that honors the diversity of users and ensures that no single interest dominate the conversation.

AVCP urges the committee and Alaska State Legislature to advance HB 125 and demonstrate a commitment to equity, cultural respect, and the long-term health of Alaska's fisheries.

Thank you for considering these comments as you deliberate on this very important issue.

Sincerely,

ASSOCIATION OF VILLAGE COUNCIL PRESIDENTS

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Vivian Korthuis". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Vivian" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Korthuis".

Vivian Korthuis  
Chief Executive Officer