

Mark Richards
375 Hagelbarger Ave
Fairbanks, AK 99712

April 21, 2025

To: House Fisheries Committee

Re: Board of Fisheries Appointment – Olivia Irwin

Representative Stutes and members of the House Fisheries Committee,

This is my personal testimony **in support** of Olivia Irwin for the Board of Fisheries.

As a member of the Fairbanks Fish & Game Advisory Committee, and in my role as Executive Director of Resident Hunters of Alaska, I have gotten to know Olivia Irwin from her attendance at various Advisory Committee meetings, Regional Advisory Council meetings, Board of Game meetings, and other meetings where fish and game management issues are discussed.

Ms. Irwin is the current co-chair of the Minto-Nenana Fish & Game Advisory Committee and also serves on the Eastern Interior Regional Advisory Council.

I have steadily been impressed with Ms. Irwin's knowledge of fish and game issues and her tenacity in learning more about the problems facing our fisheries and how best to address those problems in a way that respects and understands the viewpoints of others. She is passionate about addressing the decline of our salmon stocks and finding long-term solutions that will ensure subsistence fishing opportunities can continue in the future.

One of my personal concerns after being involved in fish and game management issues for so long is that we rarely see younger Alaskans get involved in the process of serving on Fish & Game Advisory Committees and attending Board of Game and Board of Fisheries Meetings. Ms. Irwin is an exception – and an amazing one at that! – and we need more people like her involved in the process.

I strongly support Ms. Irwin's appointment to the Board of Fisheries. I have no doubt that she will study the issues, listen to all sides, and make decisions that are in the best interests of our fisheries overall.

Sincerely,

Mark Richards - Fairbanks