

# Alaska State Legislature



## REPRESENTATIVE LOUISE STUTES

House District 5-Kodiak, Cordova, Seward

Date: January 30<sup>th</sup>, 2026

To: Senator Kelly Merrick  
Chair, Senate Community and Regional Affairs Committee

From: Representative Louise Stutes

Re: Response to Committee Questions on 1.27.26

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Chair Merrick and Members of the Committee,

Please see below responses to Senator Yundt's questions on HB 33- CONFLICT OF INTEREST: BDS FISHERIES/GAME.

**Can a member of the Board of Fisheries or Board of Game submit written comments as a member of the public and if so, can another board member reference those comments during final deliberations?**

*The answer to both of those questions is yes; however, the discussion evolves significantly during final deliberations. A conflicted board member who submitted written comments would not be aware of, and could not comment on, new lines of discussion or amendments proposed by other board members. Finally, once final deliberations begin, amendments and substitute motions are made on the fly and written comments on those actions are not distributed, nor could they be, before action is taken.*

*Simply put, final deliberations are exactly when you do not want a board member with expertise silenced.*

**How long have the current conflict of interest laws been in place?**

*The short answer is 19 years. As stated in committee, The Alaska Executive Branch Ethics Act (AS 39.52) was originally enacted in 1986; however, the changes that HB 33 addresses were made in 2007 through House Bill 109. In that legislation, AS 39.52.960 (14) was amended to add "advice, participation, or assistance" to the list of what constitutes "official action" by a public officer.*