

February 17, 2014

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Representative Eric Feige, Co-Chair
Representative Dan Saddler, Co-Chair
House Resources Committee
Alaska State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Reps Feige & Saddler:


I am writing in support of HB 161 related to the issuance of Governor's tags for big game hunting. SCI Alaska Chapter is a leading advocate for hunters here in Alaska and is the leading SCI Chapter in the world. The Alaska Chapter has been standing first for hunters in Alaska for over 38 years and was the leader in defeating anti-hunters in their attempt to stop bear hunting and predator/prey management at the ballot box.

HB 161 improves the statutory provisions enacted under the able direction of Senator Con Bunde and provides for a more likely scenario for the tags to be used and therefore generate revenue for Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) conservation and recruitment and retention education programs. By increasing the percentage rate from 10% to 30% and providing for consultation requirements between the ADF&G and the non-profit a permit was issued, there is far greater chance that this program will achieve the results desired in the original legislation.

Conservation has always been primarily provided for by hunters. Since its passage in 1937, the Wildlife Restoration Act, or Pittman-Robertson (PR) Act has accounted for billions in aid from sportsmen to wildlife. HB 161 is a logically next step in that storied legacy giving hunters an opportunity to increase the amount of revenue available for wildlife conservation programs that will benefit all Alaskans.

It is our understanding that the Advisory Council to the Legislative Outdoor Caucus has made passage of HB 161 a priority and has asked Caucus Members to support that effort. SCI Alaska Chapter adds its voice to that request and respectfully asks that the members of the House Resources Committee move this legislation out of committee at its earliest convenience. Thank you for your time and consideration on our request.

Sincerely,


Gary Gearhart
President

cc: House Resources Committee Members

SCI's Top Gun Chapter