



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR SEAN PARNELL

Alaska Board of Game

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February 4, 2014

Senator Pete Kelly
State Capitol, Room #516
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Senator Kelly:

Thank you for the original legislation promoting youth hunting in Alaska, and for sponsoring new legislation, SB 77, providing modifications to the youth hunting law. Board of Game (Board) members have been strong supporters of providing youth hunts but have met some difficulty authorizing seasons that begin before school starts with recent, earlier opening dates. Your amended language, to change "shall" to "may" and remove the season requirement, will help immensely in our effort to establish youth hunting opportunities.

The Board has also encountered a second issue related to the requirement for both the child and accompanying adult to validate their harvest tag when a big game animal is taken. When harvesting moose and caribou which yield a large amount of meat, this has not been an issue. At our recent meeting in Sitka, a proposal was adopted to establish a youth deer hunt and the question came up concerning both hunters validating their harvest tags for one deer. Since this area, Subunit 5A near Yakutat, has a one deer bag limit we were concerned that by combining the bag limit, it may discourage adults from participating in youth hunts since they would only be allowed to harvest one deer for the family. The estimated maximum yield of meat posted in the Department of Fish and Game regulation book, is 68 pounds for a deer. Suggested wording in lines 12 through 14 of the proposed bill should read: "A big game animal taken under this subsection, **except for Sitka black-tailed deer where the bag limit is one**, must be counted against the bag limits of both the child and the adult, parent, stepparent, or legal guardian who accompanies the child."

Board members were also concerned about the age range allowed in this statute of 8 to 17 years of age. It is our understanding that the Board has the authority to be more restrictive than the enabling legislation, therefore this concern can be addressed without needing any word changes. An age range of 10 to 17 has been used by the Board since we require youth hunters to have successfully completed a hunter education program prior to hunting.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ted Spraker".

Ted Spraker, Chairman
Alaska Board of Game

cc: Senator Peter Micciche, District O