

March 13, 2014

Dear Senate Resources Committee Members,

My name is Israel Payton. I was born in a 12 x 12 log trapper's cabin at the base of the Alaska Range at the mouth of the Hayes River near Skwentna.

I am a Registered Big Game Hunting Guide # 1111. Like many Alaskans I do various jobs to make a living. Just a few are airplane mechanic, boat builder, welder, hunting guide, tour guide, house builder, and landlord. I am also a member of the Mat- Su Fish and Game Advisory Committee and active in the Board of Game and Fish process. With all this going on it has been very frustrating and time consuming opposing DNR's Guide Concession Program(GCP) and trying to keep more government control out of our lives and the free market system.

This letter is in opposition to **SB 160 / HB 158**. Please include this as part of my public testimony. The GCP is a very complicated issue with many different tiers. I will briefly explain why I am not for implementation of the GCP and also why, if implemented some of the many flaws and detriments of the GCP.

Reasons opposing implementation of SB 160 / HB 158 GCP

- Allocation of the guide industry, will create a monopoly/against free market values
- GCP was proposed to address *social issues*, including user conflict, on state lands associated with commercial hunting activity. This is not a conservation issue (which would clearly be the responsibility of the Department of Fish and Game)
- *"has not been well received by the industry and the public..."* Cliff Judkins as Chair of Board of Game (BOG)
- The need for the GCP is not fact based; it's based on **arbitrariness, personal preferences, blankets allegations, and antidotal information.**
- Up to 66% of guides/small business owners could be forced out of business making their current and past investments and hard work null and void.
- It is a State wide blanket program when the perceived issues it will supposedly fix are in very few areas of the State.
- The state of Alaska extracts monetary payment for the exclusive use of oil, gas, minerals, timber, fish and land. Exclusive hunting concession areas should be no different. The proposed fees cover the cost of administering the GCP and wholly separate from paying the state for exclusive use of a resource. As proposed by DNR no money will go to the general fund or even to a Fish and Game fund for harvesting an exclusive resource that we all as shareholders of the State own. This is why Exclusive Guide Areas (EGAs) were found unconstitutional in the *Owsichek* decision. *Owsichek* also stated assignments of

EGAs were not based on wildlife management concerns and that is still the case today with the GCP.

- A small segment of the guide industry, the Alaska Professional Hunters Association (APHA) has lobbied hard for the GCP. Not only have they lobbied the Legislature but also the BOG and the Big Game Commercial Services Board (BGCSB). It is important to remember that the APHA is a very small, but loud and connected segment of the guide industry with only roughly 125-140 members. That means **10%** of licensed guides.
- What this GCP SB 160/HB 158 all boils down to is to cut down competition between guides/businesses and it **will** do that. The haves vs. the have not, big vs. small. I guess you have to ask yourself if competition and free market is a good thing or not.

I apologize for the length of this letter; the GCP is a very contentious and controversial subject. Please spend your time and the States money on more important issues that concern the majority of Alaskans, do not pass SB 160 / HB 158

Thank You,

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