

Please be advised I oppose HB 110, let's do something that's meaningful and quit acting like our DC representatives.

Representative Seaton,

The Alaska Outdoor Council strongly opposes House Bill 110, prohibiting the use of barbed hooks in certain freshwater fisheries.

The Alaska Outdoor Council, incorporated in the Territory of Alaska in 1955, is the voice of over 10,000 Alaskans who belong to 51 member clubs throughout the state. Many of our members (as well as many other Alaskans who are not AOC members) harvest wild food as part of their traditional lifestyle, including fishing for salmon for their personal use. Unfortunately, they are currently placed at a distinct disadvantage in doing so, because they are limited to using hook and line instead of nets. HB 110 puts these users at even more of a disadvantage.

On the Kenai Peninsula, the Kenai River dipnet fishery provides a reasonable opportunity for Alaskans to catch - with a dipnet - personal use salmon. In the Copper River drainage, the Chitina River dipnet fishery provides a reasonable opportunity for Alaskans to catch - with a dipnet - personal use salmon. In other parts of the state Alaskans can use gill nets to catch personal use and subsistence salmon. However, in the drainage nearest to the largest population of Alaskans, the Susitna River and its tributaries, residents are limited to using hook and line to catch their personal use fish. The reason is that Susitna drainage fisheries are classified by the Board of Fisheries as "sport" fisheries, even though the end use of these fish is exactly the same as other Alaskans who are able to use nets - it is eaten fresh, or dried, smoked or frozen for use at a later date to feed themselves and their families.

While it is true that some residents (and non-residents) engage in "catch-and-release" fishing for sport, where a fish is caught with a hook, then unhooked and released, this is a small group. According to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, commercial users take 98.3% of the fish and game in Alaska, subsistence and personal use takes 1.1% and sport takes 0.6%. If there is a problem your legislation is attempting to solve, which I haven't seen evidence of, it's hard to believe that six-tenths of users are the source. HB 110 is scheduled to be heard on February 21. Before it is heard again, and certainly before it moves from the Fisheries Committee, you owe the thousands of Alaskans who live in the Upper Cook Inlet area - both long-term residents who have practiced personal use fishing for multiple generations, and short-term residents, many of whom have recently relocated from rural villages - a hard look at the effect this legislation will have on their ability to harvest Alaska salmon, especially in light of the disadvantages they already face.

As the executive director of the AOC I have attended every Board of Fisheries meeting for the past several years. I am also at many of the local fish and game advisory committee meetings where ADF&G biologists and personnel present information. Further, I attend the various outdoors shows, meetings, conferences all over the state. I will not say that barbed hooks are not causing a problem, but I will say that not one time has anyone from

ADF&G or anyone else with a deep knowledge of freshwater fisheries told me they are a problem, nor have I read anything from ADF&G which stated they are a problem. You chair the Fisheries Committee and with that position come certain privileges, such as hearing bills of your choosing, like HB 110. I will grant you that, but urge you to use your time on topics that make a difference to more Alaskans.

--

Duane Mathes

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Sincerely,

Rod Arno, Executive Director

Alaska Outdoor Council

Email:

rep.paul.seaton@akleg.gov

then cc:

rep.eric.feige@akleg.gov

rep.lynn.gattis@akleg.gov

rep.bob.herron@akleg.gov

rep.craig.johnson@akleg.gov

rep.kurt.olson@akleg.gov

Rep.Jonathan.Kreiss-Tomkins@akleg.gov

Thank You,

Bill Iverson

President

Alaska Outdoor Council

“Protecting your Hunting, Trapping, Fishing and Access Rights”

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February 19, 2013

RE: House Bill 110

Representative Seaton,

The Alaska Outdoor Council (AOC) strongly opposes House Bill 110, prohibiting the use of barbed hooks in certain freshwater fisheries.

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there is a problem your legislation is attempting to solve, which I haven't seen evidence of, it's hard to believe that users who harvest less than 1% of all fish and game are the source. HB 110 is scheduled to be heard on February 21. Before it is heard again, and certainly before it moves from the Fisheries Committee, you owe the thousands of Alaskans who live in the Upper Cook Inlet area - both long-term residents who have practiced personal use fishing for multiple generations, and short-term residents, many of whom have recently relocated from rural villages - a hard look at the effect this legislation will have on their ability to harvest Alaska salmon, especially in light of the disadvantages they already face.

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Rod Arno
Alaska Outdoor Council
310 K Street, Suite 200
Anchorage, Alaska 99501
Phone: 907-841-6849