

Alaska State Legislature

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REPRESENTATIVE PAUL SEATON HOUSE DISTRICT 30

July 30, 2014

Dear Senator Fairclough,

I respectfully request the Legislative Budget and Audit Committee approve an audit of the Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission (CFEC) with a focus on opportunities for consolidation.

The CFEC is a quasi-judicial established in 1973 to administer a limited entry program. CFEC's goals were to develop a program that could be applied fairly and flexibly to each fishing area throughout the state, with the long-range goal of ensuring economically and biologically healthy professional fisheries. From the 1970s through 1990s the commission established limited entry fisheries almost annually and their case-load of appeals in the early 1990s exceeded 1,000. However, the last limited entry was in 2004 and the annual number of cases has steadily declined to less than 50 cases in 2013.

As a result of the efforts of the commission, the state's fisheries have stabilized somewhat for limited entry and the commission adjudication workload has decreased. Given these circumstances, and that several functions are similar in nature to duties performed by other departments; I request an audit of CFEC. The purpose of the audit is to determine whether efficiencies and cost savings could be achieved by consolidating the agency within existing state agencies, and still meet legislative intent for limited entry.

Specifically, I request the audit include the following:

- Identify CFEC's efforts in limiting fisheries, processing appeals, conducting research activities, and monitoring transfers of permits from FY 05 through FY 14. Compare those duties to staffing levels, and analyze how each has fluctuated.
- Research state law and legislative intent in creating CFEC. Determine whether their purpose and ascribed functions could be performed by another state agency. Analyze whether cost savings could be achieved through merging similar functions performed by another state agency.
- Determine whether DFG has sufficient capabilities to support CFEC's information technology requirements.

- Identify and evaluate staff titles and job duties and determine which, if any, work efforts are not essential to CFEC's purpose, or required by law. Additionally, analyze the actual personal service costs, by job title, to budgeted positions to identify gaps between actual and budgeted personnel services.
- Determine whether the adjudication functions performed by CFEC could be performed by the Office of Administrative Hearings within the Department of Administration, in an appropriate and timely manner. Additionally, determine whether the increased case load in OAH would require additional staffing.

In addition, the auditors should pursue any other related matter that comes to their attention during the audit.

Please reply to confirm that you have received this audit request, and thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Paul K. Seaton". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

Representative Paul Seaton