

Talking Points on HB266

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Dear Co-Chairman and Members of the House Resources Committee,

I appreciate the opportunity to submit this comment concerning HB266, today I am **representing myself**.

As a member and current chairman of Board of Game (Board), I as well as other members have stated how proud we are of our open public process, there is not a better system in the world of wildlife management. I have been involved in this process for approximately 42 years as a State Wildlife Biologist and five term member of the Board. During our last meeting in Fairbanks, we had 121 people sign up to testify, lasting three full days.

I have concerns from last Friday's testimony on HB266 given to your committee addressing the Board and our public process.

The Board has offered Board Generated Proposals since its inception, over 4 decades, and not until 207 was offered did this issue arise. Proposal 207 addresses hunter ethics, fair chase and helps "level the playing field" in the highly competitive hunting of Dall sheep. 207 cannot be successfully argued against on its merits, so some people have chosen to attack the process. "A Dall sheep can get away from a hunter but cannot get away from a super cub".

Fourteen percent of resident sheep hunters and 60-70 percent of guides accompanying non-resident sheep hunters own and use aircraft to spot sheep during the season, compared to 86 percent of resident sheep hunters that do not. The issue of aircraft abuse to spot sheep has been discussed since the 60s. The Boone and Crockett Club, Big Game Commercial Services Board and many members of the public support this regulation on its merits.

In my opinion, the Board followed all four criteria in the Joint Board Policy:

1. **Is it in the public's best interest....** Yes. Since it benefits the majority of resident sheep hunters.
2. **Is there urgency in considering the issue....**yes. The Board has been under extreme pressure for about a decade to take a leadership role in addressing the competition between resident sheep hunters and guided non-resident hunters.
3. **Are current processes insufficient to bring the subject to the Board's attention....**This criterion can be debated but after a decade of the same narrowly focused proposals from the same few individuals, the Board was acting in the public's best interest by bringing these issues forward. We also convened the Sheep Working Group made up of all interested Advisory Committees from the 84 committees, the 10 Rural Advisory Councils, Alaska Sheep Foundation, Alaska Wildlife Alliance, APHA, AOC, SCI, AK Airman and five at large public members, 41 members in total. They met for six days over three weekends, and did not reach consensus on any significant

issue, including proposal 207. This was the largest public process ever convened by the Board or Department to address a wildlife issue.

4. **Will there be reasonable and adequate opportunity for the public to comment....yes.** Under the Joint Policy we are mandated to provide a minimum of 30 days' notice, and we always have.

**In conclusion:** I do not support this bill because the Joint Board Policy is adequate to protect the public process.

Thank you.