



Alaska Trollers Association

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April 8, 2015

Representative Louise Stutes, Chair
House Fisheries Committee
Alaska Legislature
Juneau, AK 99811

Dear Representative Stutes and Committee Members:

The Alaska Trollers Association supports the confirmation of Robert Ruffner to the Alaska Board of Fisheries (Board).

The most essential ingredient of a solid Board process is the appointment of people who bring to the table a willingness to learn, combined with a shared vision of sustaining both fisheries resources and fishing communities. It is important for fishermen of all kinds that the Board is made up of people with first-hand knowledge of Alaska's fisheries and gear, but that's only one part of the equation. How they approach their task can make all the difference when it comes to successfully harmonizing the needs of each region. There are lots of ideas about what mix of people makes up a 'balanced' Board of Fish, but we contend it's not just a head count by gear type - with well over 150 fisheries around the state, that's an impossible goal. Board member 'attitude' is a huge component of successful Board outcomes and should not be overlooked.

Mr. Ruffner is an angler who has proven himself a consensus builder. He honed that people-skill while working to protect habitat and sustain Alaska's natural resources. Robert is familiar with Cook Inlet and the value of all fisheries to the social and economic health of the region and state. He has expressed a commitment to science; transparent decision-making; and, bridging diverse interests for the good of all. That kind of attitude is precisely what's needed on the Board, and far outweighs the wearing of any particular fishery stripe.

Therefore, ATA supports Mr. Ruffer for the Board, because we believe he will be studious about learning what he needs to know and applying that knowledge to best serve the resource and fishing public. We hope you agree and will vote to confirm his appointment to the Board of Fisheries.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if I can provide additional information or be of help in any way.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dale Kelley". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Executive Director