

Dear Representatives Stutes and Ortiz;

I want to express my support for HB 87, CONFLICT OF INTEREST: BD FISHERIES/GAME. I believe this action is long overdue.

As a retired biologist with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game with over 30-years' experience, I participated in many meetings of the Alaska BOF. As such, I was witness to a few times (actually not that many during my tenure with the Dept.) when BOF members, who were particularly knowledgeable about proposals that were before the BOF were not allowed to even sit at the dais during deliberations, let alone discuss or vote on the issues. In a few of those cases, the BOF members who were allowed to vote were not as fully informed as they should have been and made decisions that, in my opinion, were wrong. If the conflicted BOF member(s) had been allowed to discuss the issues the votes may have been different. I also find it very frustrating when BOF members are conflicted out of the majority of proposals due to conflicts of interests. Specifically, in the case of John Jensen of Petersburg, he has often been conflicted out of the majority of commercial fishing proposals because he has family members who commercial fish and may (or maybe not) be affected by the decisions of the BOF. Mr. Jensen is from a large family of commercial fishermen that extends back many decades and he is extremely knowledgeable on virtually all Southeast Alaska commercial (and sport) fisheries. While, maybe he shouldn't be allowed to vote, by not allowing him to participate in the discussions, the BOF is often relegated to making decisions with less information than they should have. This is not good for either the resource or commercial fisheries and fishermen.

Thank you for introducing HB 87. If I can be of assistance as this bill moves through the Legislator, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Brian Lynch

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