



ALASKA
Bering Sea Crabbers

206.783.0188 | 4005 20th Avenue W, Suite 102 | Seattle, WA 98199
alaskaberingseacrabbers.com

March 8, 2019

Representative Louise Stutes
House Fisheries Committee
State Capitol Room 406
Juneau, AK 99801

RE: HB 35 - Conflict of Interest Bill

Dear Chair Stutes and Committee Members,

The Alaska Bering Sea Crabbers (ABSC) is a non-profit trade association representing the harvesters of king, opilio (snow), and bairdi (Tanner) crab in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands. We are actively involved in fisheries management, policy development, scientific research, and marketing. ABSC would like to offer our support for HB 35 (Conflict of Interest Bill).

ABSC supports allowing Board of Fisheries members that have a conflict of interest on a given issue to participate in deliberations but abstain from voting. ABSC believes that a Board member with a conflict of interest should be able to stay at the table while deliberations occur and participate in the discussion. Doing so will allow for more productive Board discussions about what the proposal means and its potential impacts.

Participating in deliberations would allow a Board member to discuss the proposal, to answer questions if asked, to ask questions of staff, to help build the record, and to state their opinion. However, Board members with a conflict of interest should not be allowed to make motions, amendments, substitute motions, vote on amendments, vote on the proposal, or vote on whether a proposal should be brought back for reconsideration.

Board members who conflict out of deliberations bring valuable information and resources to the discussion that other Board members could benefit from. Allowing Board members with a conflict of interest to participate in the deliberations allows for greater transparency in the public process, allows for the discussion to be on the record, and allows for more informed decision making.

This position is in alignment with the United Fishermen of Alaska (UFA), of which ABSC is a member.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jamie Goen
Executive Director
Alaska Bering Sea Crabbers
absc.jamie@gmail.com