ALASKA
PROFESSIONAL HUNTERS ASSOCIATION, INC.

P.O. Box 240971 ~ Anchorage, AK 99524

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March 21, 2019

Dear Representative Stutes,

The Alaska Professional Hunters Association (APHA) was formed in 1972 to provide a voice for hunting guides in Alaska. APHA was founded to support wildlife conservation, continued access to federal lands and professionalism within the hunting guide industry. Over the last 40 plus years APHA has participated as a stakeholder in major wildlife conservation and land access issues to include: drafting of hunting guide specific provisions of ANILCA, support state primacy in wildlife management, advocating for intensive management and food security in rural Alaska and support for a fair and open wildlife management process at the board of game. Hunting guides have vested interest in wildlife conservation and the success of state of Alaska institutions.

Shortly after statehood, the Alaska legislature delegated fish and wildlife to the joint board of fish and game. Subsequently the joint board became the board of fish and the board of game. Since that time Governors have sought to appoint knowledgeable experts on fish and game to the respective boards. Various hunting guides have served on both boards and in the legislature from statehood to the inception of boards of fish and game. It is our belief that the legislature always intended to delegate its constitutional authority to a board or "panel" of expert citizens to make important decisions in line with Article VIII of our constitution. It is also our belief that the legislature envisioned service on the boards of fish and game was to be a volunteer, community service and not an opportunity to use an appointed position for personal gain. APHA supports the intent behind the formation of the boards of game and fish but we have become increasingly concerned that hunting guides, as commercial users, may be increasingly excluded from important board discussions.

On behalf of Alaska's hunting guide industry I want to thank you for sponsoring House Bill 35 and offer APHA's full support for this measure. We believe that HB 35 strikes a healthy balance by allowing board members with a defined conflict of interest still participate in board discussions while stile prohibiting a conflicted member from casting a vote. Our experience tells us that this will result more informed decisions where knowledgable members on a particular issue will be allowed to build the record before a vote is cast. We see knowledgable votes and solid record building being key to

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defending board decisions where state and federal authority often times are in tension. APHA sees HB 35 as an important measure in support of Alaska's public process for managing and allocation fish and wildlife in Alaska.

Please do not hesitate to contact myself or APHA for assistance as this important legislation moves through the legislative process.

Sincerely,

Sam Rohrer
President, APHA