Michael Tinker 3/31/19

Discussion for Sen. John Coghill for SB 87

I recommend NOT changing AS 16.05.256 at this time.

Presented as a way to "put more moose in Alaskans freezers" this change would not accomplish that goal. Further it could complicate the board's definition and analysis of at what point and with what evidence does the "opportunity for state residents to take big game can be reasonably satisfied" kick in?

That is a general concept not supported by any formula, percentage or science. Placing a strict requirement, changing "may to shall", forces the board into setting more regulatory guidelines. Keeping the "may" term allows them the leeway to look for specific situations where some argument could show residents to be unsatisfied.

They have not found any such situations to date although some individuals and NGO's have tried to identify that situation. The board of game has limited participation by all user groups through a permit requirement as a result of the amount of the harvestable surplus but has never eliminated nonresidents or nonresident aliens because any measure of "satisfaction".

The "shall" requirement is especially onerous with hunts for moose and caribou. The professional hunting businesses with concessions on Federal land where some permits are reserved for nonresidents would be harmed, possibly even eliminated by this change. Residents are more likely to be limited by private property owners than by state "permit" requirements. Resident hunters can hunt under subsistence regulations in even some of the areas that have low numbers of permits for general hunting. (Koyukuk River region as an example.)

The change to "shall" would force the board to make permit hunts where they are not presently needed. The test would be when resident hunters convinced them that their opportunity was not reasonable.

The present system using "may" works well. I can't think of an example that not doing it as at present would have "put more moose in Alaskans freezers". Until a significant argument can be shown to benefit residents, I ask that you not change the statute.9