

Support Israel Payton and Oppose Karl Johnstone

Todd Smith

From: Todd Smith
To: Rep. Ben Carpenter; Rep. Matt Claman; Rep. Harriet Drummond; Rep. David Eastman; Rep. Bryce Edmon; Rep. Zack Fields; Rep. Neal Foster; Rep. Sara Hannan; Rep. Grier Hopkins; Rep. Sharon Jackson; Rep. Delena Johnson; Rep. Jennifer Johnston; Rep. Andy Josephson; Rep. Gary Knopp; Rep. Chuck Koop; Rep. Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins; Rep. Bart LeBon; Rep. Gabrielle LeDoux; Rep. John Lincoln; Rep. Kelly Merrick; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Daniel Ortiz; Rep. Lance Pruitt; Rep. Sara Rasmussen; Rep. George Rauscher; Rep. Joshua Revak; Rep. Laddie Shaw; Rep. Ivv Spohnholz; Rep. Andi Story; Rep. Louise Stutes; Rep. Colleen Sullivan-Leonard; Rep. David Talerico; Rep. Geran Tarr; Rep. Steve Thomason; Rep. Cathy Tilton; Rep. Chris Tuck; Rep. Sarah Vance; Rep. Tammie Wilson; Rep. Adam Wool; Rep. Tiffany Zulkosky; Sen. Tom Begich; Sen. Chris Birch; Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. John Coughill; Sen. Mia Costello; Sen. Cathy Gessel; Sen. Elvi Gray-Jackson; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Shelley Hughes; Sen. Scott Kawasaki; Sen. Jesse Klehl; Sen. Peter Micciche; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Lora Reinbold; Sen. Mike Shower; Sen. Bert Stedman; Sen. Gary Stevens; Sen. Natasha Von Imhof; Sen. Bill Wielechowski; Sen. David Wilson
Subject: Please confirm Israel Payton and reject Karl Johnstone
Date: Monday, April 15, 2019 9:35:44 AM

Dear Legislators,

I am a Kenai resident with a lifelong love for both sport and commercial fishing. In addition to my outdoor habits, I am a local business owner and volunteer on the boards of several local quasi-governmental organizations. I try to stay involved in state and local policy and have developed a number of positive relationships with policy makers. I'm familiar with how an open public process works and am very aware of the benefits our diverse fisheries provide to my local economy. During these times of uncertain state finances, our local resources and industries are increasingly important to my area.

I know your plates are full, and there are many current issues I'd love to bend your ear on, but I felt compelled to write to you today concerning two of the Board of Fish nominees before you whom I have had personal experience dealing with:

I'm very happy to see Israel Payton re-nominated to the BOF. Israel's background differs from mine and we certainly don't agree on everything, nor has he always voted the way I might prefer. That said, every time I've dealt with Israel he has been open, honest, and respectful. He is eager to learn and discuss the issues and always strives to achieve mutually beneficial solutions. He does his homework, asks tough questions, and most of all, he respects the public process while striving to make it better. The employees of ADFG respect him because he respects the science, and they wince when he raises his hand because they expect tough, science-based questions. I encourage you to confirm Israel for continued service on the Board of Fisheries.

Conversely, I was very disappointed to see Karl Johnstone's nomination to the BOF. While he is a very smart and well-studied man, I can say with confidence that Mr. Johnstone is the most unethical person I have ever dealt with in state government. During his time as Board Chairman Mr. Johnstone was completely beholden to the special interests of Bob Penney and the Kenai River Sportfishing Association (KRSA). It was normal to see him go directly to the KRSA boardroom during meeting breaks. Known for frequent, angry outbursts, he commonly bullied other board members into voting his way. He actively manipulated the meeting schedules to suit KRSA/Penney interests – many times at the cost of a fair and open public process. During the time of Mr. Penney's setnet ban initiative, Karl personally tried to pressure me into accepting KRSA's BOF proposals, saying that if I didn't, his friends would put my family out of business. I've witnessed and heard firsthand from BOF members, ADFG employees, and journalists who Mr. Johnstone openly threatened with retribution when they opposed his wishes. He is spiteful, manipulative, and wrought with a history of unethical behavior.

I realize my comments are strong, and I weighed them heavily before sending. At the end of it I felt compelled to give an honest account of my experiences. For the betterment of Alaska and our public institutions, please confirm Israel Payton and reject Karl Johnstone.

Thank you for your time and attention on this matter. If you have questions, feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Todd Smith

Kenai