



Dear Senator Revak:

As President of the Alaska Wild Sheep Foundation (AK WSF) I would like to thank you for your efforts and express our equivocal support for Senate Bill 22. The AK WSF Mission: ***Enhance wild sheep populations, promote scientific wildlife management, educate the public on wild sheep, and protect and increase sheep hunting and viewing opportunities in Alaska.***

AK WSF is proud of our fundraising efforts in Alaska but we caution that NGO support such as ours is not a replacement or a viable alternative to a direct, continuous, user based revenue source such as the IM surcharge. AK WSF dedicates significant energy to various fundraising events to fulfill our mission by providing additional funding to the division of wildlife conservation. In the past year AK WSF fundraising efforts resulted in a direct award of \$120K and historically WSF has contributed over \$2M in funding to ADF&G for wildlife conservation in Alaska. All of this money is available for federal match at a three to one ratio resulting in \$8M of conservation on the ground in Alaska. These funds are meant to enhance the mission of ADF&G and not pay for basic mission fulfillment. Other sources such as the IM Surcharge are meant to prevent ADF&G mission degradation.

Alaska, as you know is one of the few states that receive the maximum Pitman- Robinson Funding allowable by law. To take advantage of these funds the State must generate sufficient matching dollars to ensure a full utilization. That has not always been the case in Alaska. It is incumbent on all of us to ensure that we do not waste this valuable resource by ensuring that sufficient matching dollars are always available at State level. The IM Surcharge is one source of that funding.

Wild sheep in Alaska and wildlife management as a whole is facing unprecedented challenges in the coming four years. Three years ago Mycoplasma Ovipneumoniae was confirmed in our populations of wild sheep. ADFG responded appropriately and allocated significant resources to testing live wild animals and partnering with hunters to get a handle on the extent of the outbreak. Absent a well funded division of wildlife this critical work to understand and hopefully prevent additional transmission may not continue.

At a time when State management of wildlife is under constant attack from Federal management encroachment like recent efforts to reduce hunting opportunity, it is imperative that we take advantage of every funding source to ensure that ADF&G remains fully funded and viable to fulfill its primary mission to help avoid Federal overreach.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment on SB22 and for your strong leadership efforts to keep important funding to support sound wildlife management.

Kevin J. Kehoe  
President, Alaska Wild Sheep Foundation

[www.AKWildSheep.org](http://www.AKWildSheep.org)