

# Senator Jesse Bjorkman

*Alaska State Legislature*

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## **SB 171 Residency Req: Hunting, Trapping, Fishing Ver. A Sponsor Statement**

Senate Bill 171 Residency Req: Hunting, Trapping, Fishing aligns residency requirements for an individual to receive a resident hunting, trapping, or sport fishing license with the residency eligibility requirements to receive a Permanent Fund Dividend (AS 43.23). With the increased pressure on our limited fish and game resources, it is important to ensure that those who enjoy the increased bag and harvest limits associated with a resident license are, in fact, residents of the State of Alaska.

The current definition of residency is too broad and difficult to enforce. Currently, individuals can qualify for a resident license and be indefinitely absent so long as they meet the low threshold of intending to remain in Alaska, maintaining a domicile in Alaska, and not establishing residency elsewhere. Someone who is away from Alaska for most of the year can still qualify as a resident and have the same access to our finite fish and game resources as someone who lives in the state 12 months of the year.

Regrettably, some of Alaska's fish and game resources are not as robust as they once were. When there are fewer fish and game resources to go around it is that much more important to maintain sufficient resources for those who are full-time residents of the state and reduced access for those who harvest fish and game in Alaska and then take the resource out of state. Allowing greater access to fish and game resources for year-round residents of Alaska will ensure that individuals and communities who depend most on the resource will have access.

SB 171 does not prohibit out-of-state hunters or fishermen from coming to Alaska to participate in the state's well-managed hunts and fisheries. Guided hunting and fishing industries are an important part of Alaska's economy. Under this legislation, visitors will still be able to obtain non-resident permits without additional restrictions. SB 171 ensures that those who qualify for a resident hunting, trapping, or sportfishing license are in fact residents of Alaska and are deserving of the increased bag and harvest limits that are the privilege of state residents.