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Governor Mike Dunleavy  
STATE OF ALASKA

January 24, 2024

The Honorable Cathy Tilton  
Speaker of the House  
Alaska State Legislature  
Capitol Building, Room 208  
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Speaker Tilton:

Under the authority of Article III, Section 18 of the Alaska Constitution, I am transmitting a bill to establish a sport fishing license surcharge for the purpose of increasing non-boating angler access to fishing resources. This bill adds a surcharge ranging from \$4 to \$40 to sports fishing licenses purchased depending on the type of license purchased.

This bill will create parity in angler access to fishing resources between shore access and motorized access. Currently, the Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Act directs the majority of its funding to boating access projects and cannot be used for projects that primarily support subsistence or personal use. Consequently, funding requests for non-boating angler access compete directly with other eligible programs for State funding. The imposition of the surcharge will alleviate some of the pressure on these funding requests and increase the ability of the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) to support subsistence and personal use access to fisheries.

Under the terms of the bill, a sport fishing angler access surcharge is assessed on all sport fishing licenses purchased in the State. The bill waives the surcharge for disabled veterans and active members of the Alaska National Guard, along with individuals eligible for a \$5 license due to financial issues. The surcharge is \$4 for residents and special nonresident military licenses. The surcharge for all other nonresidents varies between \$5 for a one-day license to \$40 for an annual nonresident license. The funds collected under the bill will be deposited into the Sport Fishing Angler Access Account within the Fish and Game Fund. The purpose of this account is to directly benefit anglers through the development and improvement of access, services, and facilities for lakes, ponds, or waterways not related to motor or power boat use.

Fishing access is of critical importance in Alaska. While federal funds assist with ensuring motorized fishing access, many Alaskans utilize trails and shore-side assets to engage in recreational and subsistence fishing. Establishment of a sport fishing angler access surcharge will

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allow DFG to fund critical services supporting recreational and subsistence fishing, including the construction and maintenance of trails, development and construction of angler access facilities, and the increasing of public awareness of access to angling opportunities through publication of guides, brochures, maps, internet sites, and other aids.

I urge your prompt and favorable action on this measure.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mike Dunleavy", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Mike Dunleavy  
Governor

Enclosure