



ALASKA CHARTER ASSOCIATION
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March 11, 2025

Representative Louise Stutes
Alaska State Legislature

Re: HCR 001

Representative Stutes,

Thank you for your focus on issues affecting guided sportfishing and your concern for its long-term well-being. I'm writing on behalf of the Alaska Charter Association in support of HCR1.

As a guide in the Southeast Alaska charter industry since 1985, I'm fortunate enough to remember a time when fish stocks throughout the state were abundant, bag limits were considerably more liberal, and tourism was on the rise. Over the years, I've witnessed and experienced a gradual, but steady, decline in fish stocks and bag limits, and the maturing of tourism in Alaska. The current situation finds us with diminished resources, increased competition among the various sectors of the fishing community for them, and a tourism industry that is a major segment of the Southeast Alaska economy, with all the benefits and disadvantages that entails.

The guided sportfishing industry is a significant part of Southeast Alaska tourism. It accounted for over \$200 million in revenue and generated more than \$11 million in fees and taxes to local and state governments in 2024, according to a study commissioned by the Southeast Alaska Guides Organization. The charter industry is essential to the well-being of its participants and the local communities that benefit from it.

Forming a task force to consider entry controls to regulate the guided sportfishing industry is a step toward safeguarding the charter industry's future. May I suggest that, after examining the issue, the task force:

- determine if entry controls are warranted
- if so, recommend what controls are necessary to ensure the continued viability of the industry
- develop ways to regulate the number of participants, while allowing the next generation of small, independent operators (who make up the core of the industry) the opportunity to get started without exceedingly difficult barriers to entry

The state should act on this matter before it encounters the level of turmoil currently seen in Alaska's commercial seafood industry. Ensuring the long-term viability of the charter industry is an investment in Alaska's future, maximizing the return on its valuable, but limited, marine resources.

Respectfully submitted,

Wayne T. Nasu
Executive Director, Alaska Charter Association