

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE  
HOUSE RESOURCES STANDING COMMITTEE**

April 5, 2013

1:06 p.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Representative Eric Feige, Co-Chair  
Representative Dan Saddler, Co-Chair  
Representative Peggy Wilson, Vice Chair  
Representative Mike Hawker  
Representative Craig Johnson  
Representative Paul Seaton  
Representative Geran Tarr  
Representative Chris Tuck

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Representative Kurt Olson

**COMMITTEE CALENDAR**

SENATE BILL NO. 2

"An Act enacting the Interstate Mining Compact and relating to the compact; relating to the Interstate Mining Commission; and providing for an effective date."

- MOVED SB 2 OUT OF COMMITTEE

CONFIRMATION HEARING(S):

Alaska Oil and Gas Conservation Commission

Cathy Foerster - Anchorage

- CONFIRMATION(S) ADVANCED

Big Game Commercial Services Board

Karen Polley - Juneau  
James "Tom" Atkins - Anchorage  
James David Jones - Kodiak  
Gene Peltola Sr. - Bethel  
Henry Tiffany IV - Fairbanks

- CONFIRMATION(S) ADVANCED

Board of Game

Peter Probasco - Palmer  
Nathan Turner - Nenana

- CONFIRMATION(S) ADVANCED

**PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION**

BILL: SB 2

SHORT TITLE: INTERSTATE MINING COMPACT & COMMISSION

SPONSOR(S): SENATOR(S) GIESSEL

01/16/13	(S)	PREFILE RELEASED 1/7/13
01/16/13	(S)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
01/16/13	(S)	STA, FIN
02/12/13	(S)	STA AT 9:00 AM BUTROVICH 205
02/12/13	(S)	Moved SB 2 Out of Committee
02/12/13	(S)	MINUTE(STA)
02/13/13	(S)	STA RPT 4DP
02/13/13	(S)	DP: DYSON, WIELECHOWSKI, COGHILL, GIESSEL
02/27/13	(S)	FIN RPT 5DP 1NR
02/27/13	(S)	DP: MEYER, DUNLEAVY, FAIRCLOUGH, BISHOP, HOFFMAN
02/27/13	(S)	NR: OLSON
02/27/13	(S)	FIN AT 9:00 AM SENATE FINANCE 532
02/27/13	(S)	Moved SB 2 Out of Committee
02/27/13	(S)	MINUTE(FIN)
03/11/13	(S)	TRANSMITTED TO (H)
03/11/13	(S)	VERSION: SB 2
03/13/13	(H)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
03/13/13	(H)	RES, FIN
04/05/13	(H)	RES AT 1:00 PM BARNES 124

**WITNESS REGISTER**

SENATOR CATHY GIESSEL  
Alaska State Legislature  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** As the sponsor, introduced SB 2.

ED FOGELS, Deputy Commissioner  
Office of the Commissioner  
Department of Natural Resources (DNR)  
Anchorage, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in support of SB 2, and answered questions.

GREGORY CONRAD, Executive Director  
Interstate Mining Compact Commission (IMCC)  
Herndon, Virginia

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in support of SB 2, and answered questions.

MIKE SATRE, Executive Director  
Council of Alaska Producers  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in support of SB 2.

DEANTHA CROCKETT, Executive Director  
Alaska Miners Association (AMA)  
Anchorage, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in support of SB 2.

MARLEANNA HALL, Project Coordinator  
Resource Development Council for Alaska, Inc. (RDC)  
Anchorage, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in support of SB 2.

CATHY FOERSTER, Appointee  
Alaska Oil and Gas Conservation Commission (AOGCC)  
Anchorage, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified as appointee to the Alaska Oil and Gas Conservation Commission.

KAREN POLLEY, Appointee  
Big Game Commercial Services Board  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified as appointee to the Big Game Commercial Services Board.

DICK ROHRER  
Kodiak, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in support of Karen Polley, James "Tom" Atkins, James David Jones, Gene Peltola Sr., and Henry Tiffany IV, appointees to the Big Game Commercial Services Board; and Peter Probasco and Nathan Turner, appointees to the Board of Game.

SAM ROHRER, President  
Alaska Professional Hunters Association (APHA)  
Kodiak, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in support of Karen Polley, James "Tom" Atkins, James David Jones, Gene Peltola Sr., and Henry Tiffany IV, appointees to the Big Game Commercial Services Board; and Peter Probasco and Nathan Turner, appointees to the Board of Game.

JASON BUNCH, Registered Guide, License No. GUI A 6848  
Kodiak, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in support of Karen Polley, James David Jones, and Henry Tiffany IV, appointees to the Big Game Commercial Services Board; and Peter Probasco, and Nathan Turner, appointees to the Board of Game.

JAMES A. "TOM" ATKINS, Appointee  
Big Game Commercial Services Board  
Anchorage, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified as appointee to the Big Game Commercial Services Board.

JAMES DAVID JONES, Appointee  
Big Game Commercial Services Board  
Kodiak, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified as appointee to the Big Game Commercial Services Board.

PAUL CHERVENAK, Chair  
Kodiak Fish and Game Advisory Committee  
Alaska Department of Fish & Game;  
Registered Guide, License No. GUI M 160  
Kodiak, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in support of James David Jones, Peter Peltola, and Henry Tiffany IV, appointees to the Big Game Commercial Services Board; and Peter Probasco and Nathan Turner, appointees to the Board of Game.

GENE PELTOLA SR., Appointee  
Big Game Commercial Services Board  
Bethel, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified as appointee to the Big Game Commercial Services Board.

HENRY D. TIFFANY IV, Appointee  
Big Game Commercial Services Board  
Fairbanks, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified as appointee to the Big Game Commercial Services Board.

VIRGIL UMPHENOUR, Chair  
Fairbanks Fish and Game Advisory Committee  
Alaska Department of Fish and Game;  
Registered Guide, License No. GUI M 151  
Fairbanks, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in support of Henry Tiffany IV, appointee to the Big Game Commercial Services Board; and Peter Probasco and Nathan Turner, appointees to the Board of Game.

AL BARRETTE, Vice Chair  
Fairbanks Fish and Game Advisory Committee  
Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
Fairbanks, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in support of Henry Tiffany IV, appointee to the Big Game Commercial Services Board; and Peter Probasco and Nathan Turner, appointees to the Board of Game.

ROBERT FITHIAN, Registered Guide, License No. GUI M 126  
Lower Tonsina, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in support of Henry Tiffany IV, appointee to the Big Game Commercial Services Board; and Peter Probasco and Nathan Turner, appointees to the Board of Game.

DANIEL MONTGOMERY, Vice Chair  
Matanuska Valley Fish and Game Advisory Committee  
Alaska Department of Fish and Game;  
Registered Guide, License No. GUI M 173  
Wasilla, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in support of Henry Tiffany IV, appointee to the Big Game Commercial Board; and Peter Probasco and Nathan Turner, appointees to the Board of Game.

PETER PROBASCIO, Appointee  
Board of Game  
Palmer, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified as appointee to the Board of Game.

ROD ARNO, Executive Director  
Alaska Outdoor Council (AOC)  
Palmer, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in support of Peter Probasco, appointee to the Board of Game.

NATHAN TURNER, Appointee  
Board of Game  
Nenana, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified as appointee to the Board of Game.

GREG ROCZICKA  
Bethel, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in support of Nathan Turner, appointee to the Board of Game.

#### **ACTION NARRATIVE**

[1:06:00 PM](#)

**CO-CHAIR DAN SADDLER** called the House Resources Standing Committee meeting to order at 1:06 p.m. Representatives Tuck, Hawker, Seaton, Feige, and Saddler were present at the call to order. Representatives Tarr, Johnson, and P. Wilson arrived as the meeting was in progress.

CO-CHAIR SADDLER informed the committee the confirmation hearing on appointees to the Board of Fisheries was cancelled and related documents have been forwarded to members and to the Bill Action Status Inquiry System (BASIS) for public access.

#### **SB 2-INTERSTATE MINING COMPACT & COMMISSION**

[1:07:08 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR SADDLER announced that the first order of business would be SENATE BILL NO. 2, "An Act enacting the Interstate Mining Compact and relating to the compact; relating to the Interstate Mining Commission; and providing for an effective date."

[1:07:54 PM](#)

SENATOR CATHY GIESSEL, Alaska State Legislature, sponsor, informed the committee SB 2 allows Alaska to become a full member in the Interstate Mining Compact Commission (IMCC), which is a coalition of mining states that joins together to share best practices, discuss issues, and work to better protect the environment, public safety, and employees, as well as develop mining resources. She emphasized Alaska's vast resources are not just in oil and gas, but in many minerals such as gold, silver, and zinc. At this time, Alaska is an associate member in IMCC, however, becoming a full member gives the state a broader voice nationally and allows for collaboration with other states on issues related to the best practices in mining.

1:09:20 PM

ED FOGELS, Deputy Commissioner, Office of the Commissioner, Department of Natural Resources (DNR), expressed DNR's support for SB 2. Mining activity in Alaska has been increasing - there are now seven operating mines that contribute economically to their regions - and which DNR successfully regulates, manages, and oversees. All of the mines have excellent environmental records. However, DNR seeks to improve its permitting system and its collaboration and relationship with the federal government. For seven years, Alaska has been an associate member of IMCC, an organization that brings together the regulatory and environmental programs from twenty-five mining states. In this forum, states exchange information on successful programs and learn from each other, and most importantly, bring the full weight of influence from member states to bear on Congress and federal agencies. Further, IMCC has been instrumental in many federal and state issues affecting permitting and regulatory processes; for example, IMCC is meeting with the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to address the possible impacts of its initiative to regulate bonding for hard rock mining throughout the nation. This initiative has the potential to reduce each state's mining regulatory and permitting processes, and IMCC is working to maintain strong state programs. In addition, IMCC has arranged that states meet regularly with the director of the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA), U.S. Department of Labor, to ensure efficient and reasonable safety regulations. As the governor's current designee to IMCC, Mr. Fogels has seen the benefits membership has brought to the state, and full membership will allow the state to become a voting member, help set the policy direction of the organization, and contribute to its voice in Washington, DC. He encouraged the committee to support the bill.

1:13:06 PM

GREGORY CONRAD, Executive Director, Interstate Mining Compact Commission (IMCC), stated his support of SB 2 and expressed his belief the bill arose from Alaska's experience as an associate member of IMCC since 2006. In today's regulatory climate, it is important for state governments to be heard in Washington, DC, and for their concerns to be understood, particularly when related to mining and environmental issues. His organization is recognized by many for its experience and expertise; for example, IMCC testimony on behalf of member states has been

requested for Congressional hearings on topics such as Good Samaritan protections for hard rock abandoned mine cleanup, stream protection requirements, hard rock financial assurance requirements, legislation, and state grant programs. Other agencies and organizations utilize IMCC also. Mr. Conrad referred to IMCC's annual report which was included in the committee packet, noting IMCC is called upon to provide member states' recommendations to Congress and federal regulators and agencies. He stated that full and active participation by full members carry IMCC forward, and Alaska's full membership will ensure its vote in guiding the direction of the IMCC and thereby lead the organization; Alaska will also continue to garner its present benefits that include communications, meetings, programs and initiatives. In addition, Alaska's full membership will be recognized by Congress and federal agencies, and entitle the state to heard and supported by the other member states. He concluded that IMCC's focus allows it to delve deeper into the concerns of mining and related environmental protection issues. Mr. Conrad encouraged the committee to approve the proposed legislation.

[1:18:20 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE JOHNSON asked Mr. Conrad to explain the IMCC dues structure.

MR. CONRAD explained the member states' dues are calculated by apportioning the dues based on IMCC's anticipated budget through two mechanisms: equal shares among the full member states and pro-rata shares based upon the value of both coal and hard rock mineral production. The production values, equal shares, and pro-rata shares are used to calculate the total dues for each state, which are reduced by other revenue sources such as registration and publication fees. In further response to Representative Johnson, he said the percentages are intended to reflect the total percentages for all of the full member states.

REPRESENTATIVE TARR asked if Alaska's first year of dues would be approximately \$40,000.

[1:22:33 PM](#)

MR. FOGELS advised there is a cap on the dues, even if production goes up.

MR. CONRAD added he has calculated the total value of mineral production for Alaska, based upon figures from the U.S.

Geological Survey (USGS) and the Energy Information Administration (EIA), U.S. Department of Energy, for non-coal and coal, is about \$3.5 billion. Therefore, he estimated dues for Alaska are approximately \$35,000, depending on how many full member states are participating.

REPRESENTATIVE TUCK asked whether gravel pits are included in IMCC's purview.

MR. CONRAD believed USGS figures do include aggregate.

CO-CHAIR SADDLER inquired as to the location of the other member states.

MR. CONRAD answered that the member states are located as follows: the Western states are Alaska, Colorado, New Mexico, Utah, Wyoming, Nevada, and North Dakota; the Mid-continent states are Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Louisiana, and Missouri; and the balance are in the East. Some states only have non-coal production such as New York, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Nevada. In response to Co-Chair Saddler, Mr. Conrad assured the committee that IMCC represents the full panoply of issues, although in the 1970s IMCC was primarily focused on issues pertaining to coal. In fact, IMCC recently hosted hard rock minerals symposiums in Salt Lake City and in the East.

[1:27:56 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE TARR asked whether IMCC participated in events sponsored by the Council of State Governments or the National Conference of State Legislatures.

MR. CONRAD said yes, IMCC is involved with a number of other state government organizations, including a close relationship with the Council of State Governments. Other connections include the Western Governors Association, the National Governors Association, the National Association of Abandoned Mine Land Programs - EPA, the Association of Clean Water Administrators, and the Environmental Council of the States.

[1:29:41 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR SADDLER opened public testimony.

[1:29:52 PM](#)

MIKE SATRE, Executive Director, Council of Alaska Producers, said he is a resident of Juneau and the Council of Alaska Producers is a nonprofit trade association representing large producing metal mines and major metal developmental projects in the state. His organization is in support of SB 2 and participation by the state in IMCC as a full member. His organization supports the bill because Alaska is a global leader in permitting and regulation of the mining industry and participation in IMCC will keep state officials informed. Also, he advised that local, state, and federal mining regulations can be troublesome, and IMCC deals with the federal government from a position of strength.

[1:32:15 PM](#)

DEANTHA CROCKETT, Executive Director, Alaska Miners Association (AMA), stated AMA is a statewide industry association that represents the six large metal mines in the state, the coal mine, exploration projects, placer miners, contractors, engineering firms, and others. She agreed with previous testimony in support of SB 2, adding that federal regulation is becoming increasingly difficult and IMCC provides a powerful voice in Washington, DC. Ms. Crockett said her research revealed that other Western states have benefitted greatly from their membership in IMCC. She reminded the committee that the mining industry is the second largest industry in the state.

[1:34:23 PM](#)

MARLEANNA HALL, Project Coordinator, Resource Development Council for Alaska, Inc. (RDC), stated that RDC is a membership-funded, statewide business association representing the tourism, forestry, oil and gas, mining, and fishing industries. Her organization supports the passage of SB 2 and she pointed out the state should encourage investment and worldwide interest in Alaska's mineral potential. Joining IMCC will show leadership in advocating for a healthy and stable permitting regulatory system. The importance of mining is recognized nationwide, and RDC believes IMCC will bring a collective voice to Washington, DC, to advocate for states' rights. Full membership in IMCC will allow Alaska to benefit in many ways, such as partnering on federal and state issues and promoting the mining industry in Alaska and nationwide. She urged for the timely passage of SB 2.

[1:35:42 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR SADDLER, after ascertaining no one else wished to testify, closed public testimony.

REPRESENTATIVE JOHNSON offered his strong support for SB 2, and provided an example to illustrate that individual state resolutions and letters are not as effective as those from an organized group of states with like concerns, such as the Council of State Governments-WEST. He encouraged the committee to support the bill because partnering in this type of organization is invaluable.

REPRESENTATIVE P. WILSON relayed her personal experience as a member of a group from several states that made a difference.

CO-CHAIR FEIGE has heard it said that "the federal government is not your friend," and expressed his support for the proposed legislation in order to accumulate friends for Alaska.

REPRESENTATIVE SEATON recalled reviewing the compact at the time Alaska became an associate member of IMCC. He observed that there is nothing in the compact that would override Alaska state law. He restated the benefits of joining IMCC as a full member and offered his support for SB 2.

[1:41:22 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR FEIGE moved to report SB 2 out of committee with individual recommendations and the accompanying fiscal notes. There being no objection, SB 2 was reported out of the House Resources Standing Committee.

**CONFIRMATION HEARING(S):**  
**Alaska Oil and Gas Commission**

[1:41:42 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR SADDLER announced that the next order of business would be confirmation hearings. He reminded the committee and the public that the forwarding of an appointee's name does not reflect the intent of any member to vote for or against the individual during further sessions for the purposes of confirmation. The first confirmation hearing would be of the appointee to the Alaska Oil and Gas Conservation Commission (AOGCC).

[1:42:29 PM](#)

CATHY FOERSTER, Appointee, AOGCC, informed the committee she is currently the chair of AOGCC and seeks reappointment because the job is very rewarding and AOGCC does important work. She explained that AOGCC approves all permits to drill and for well work, and approves all conservation orders on how oil and gas and geothermal fields are to be developed and produced. This work requires knowledge of the industry and of related technology, which is provided with the aid of a great experienced staff and three commissioners. Ms. Foerster described the backgrounds of the commissioners and staff. In addition, continuity in commissioners allows the work that is currently underway to proceed smoothly.

CO-CHAIR FEIGE asked what major challenges will be faced by AOGCC within the next five years.

MS. FOERSTER responded one of the biggest challenges AOGCC faces as an agency is maintaining its quality technical staff because it does not pay a competitive wage. At this time, there is one engineering vacancy and one inspector vacancy, and an increasing amount of work. Challenges to the state include exerting influence over North Slope gas off-take - Alaska statutes require permission from AOGCC to take gas from known oil fields - and staying current with advances in related technology. Also, AOGCC must keep up with a high level of activity, especially with operators new to Alaska.

REPRESENTATIVES JOHNSON, TUCK, HAWKER, FEIGE, and SEATON expressed appreciation for Ms. Foerster's work.

[1:50:50 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR FEIGE moved to advance the confirmation of Cathy Foerster, appointee to the Alaska Oil and Gas Conservation Commission to a joint session of the House and Senate for consideration. There being no objection, the confirmation was advanced.

### **Big Game Commercial Services Board**

[1:51:10 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR SADDLER announced that the next order of business would be the confirmation hearing of appointees to the Big Game Commercial Services Board.

1:51:31 PM

KAREN POLLEY, Appointee, Big Game Commercial Services Board, stated that she presently serves as the general public representative on the Big Game Commercial Services Board and is seeking reappointment. She is a long-time resident of Alaska, and her background in education contributes to her work revising exams for the board.

CO-CHAIR FEIGE asked about the appointee's U.S. Merchant Marine License 50 ton qualification.

MS. POLLEY replied she is an outdoor person and enjoys boating, fishing, and hunting.

REPRESENTATIVE TUCK inquired as to the appointee's commercial boating service.

MS. POLLEY said her primary interest was to get other women to experience the wilderness through bird watching, kayaking tours, and bear watching tours.

CO-CHAIR SADDLER opened public testimony regarding Ms. Polley.

1:55:04 PM

DICK ROHRER stated he is a long-time resident of Kodiak and former member of the Big Game Commercial Services Board. He said he served on the board with Ms. Polley, found her to be a very good person to work with, and supports her reappointment to another term.

SAM ROHRER, President, Alaska Professional Hunters Association (APHA), expressed APHA's support for Ms. Polley's reappointment to the Big Game Commercial Services Board, saying she has done a good job in the past, is fair and open-minded, and her past service is appreciated.

JASON BUNCH said he wished to recommend confirmation.

1:57:11 PM

CO-CHAIR SADDLER, after ascertaining no one else wished to testify, closed public testimony regarding Ms. Polley.

1:57:23 PM

REPRESENTATIVE TARR moved to advance the confirmation of Karen Polley, appointee to the Big Game Commercial Services Board to a joint session of the House and Senate for consideration. There being no objection, the confirmation was advanced.

[1:58:01 PM](#)

JAMES A. "TOM" ATKINS, Appointee, Big Game Commercial Services Board, said he is a four-year resident of Alaska and has been flying and guiding hunters in Alaska for thirty years. Mr. Atkins told the committee he is pleased to be part of the Big Game Commercial Services Board and serve the guides, the state, and the transporters. He commended the work of the other board members and expressed his wish for reappointment.

CO-CHAIR FEIGE asked for information regarding the appointee's air taxi service.

MR. ATKINS said most of his business is providing the flying service for other guide operators, big and small, who do not have airplanes. His activities are hunting related, although he said he does very few drop-off hunts. In further response to Co-Chair Feige, he said he flies a Super Cub.

[2:00:52 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR SADDLER opened public testimony regarding Mr. Atkins.

MR. DICK ROHRER noted he did not know Mr. Atkins personally; however, based on the governor's high criteria, he spoke in his favor.

[2:01:33 PM](#)

MR. SAM ROHRER said he did not know Mr. Atkins personally; however, based on recommendations, APHA supports his confirmation.

[2:02:24 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR SADDLER, after ascertaining no one else wished to testify, closed public testimony regarding Mr. Atkins.

[2:02:30 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR FEIGE moved to advance the confirmation of James "Tom" Atkins, appointee to the Big Game Commercial Services Board to a joint session of the House and Senate for consideration. There being no objection, the confirmation was advanced.

[2:02:55 PM](#)

JAMES DAVID JONES, Appointee, Big Game Commercial Services Board, said he has been a resident of Kodiak Island since the late 1970s, first as an air taxi pilot flying hunters and sport and commercial fishermen. He also commercial fished, and his primary career is as a sport fishing guide. Mr. Jones holds a transporter license and owns a lodge on Ugak Bay. He said he appreciates the well-managed resources around Kodiak and expressed his desire to do his part in support of the resources. Mr. Dick Rohrer encouraged him to apply to the board.

[2:04:54 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR SADDLER opened public testimony regarding Mr. Jones.

MR. DICK ROHRER testified in support of the appointment of James David Jones, stating he has known him for over 20 years. The Big Game Commercial Services Board seeks to fill one of the transporter seats with a marine transporter, and Mr. Jones holds an impeccable reputation in Kodiak with all agencies.

MR. SAM ROHRER, representing APHA, testified in support of the appointment of James David Jones, due to his experience as a marine transporter which will bring a different and important viewpoint to the board.

MR. BUNCH testified in support of the confirmation of James David Jones to the Big Game Commercial Services Board. As a 20-year member of the U.S. Coast Guard, Mr. Bunch recognizes the appointee's leadership qualities of education and experience which will be beneficial to Alaska, its resources, and the board.

[2:07:31 PM](#)

PAUL CHERVENAK, Chair, Kodiak Fish and Game Advisory Committee, ADFG, said he has been a member of the Kodiak Fish and Game Advisory Committee for 18 years and has known Mr. Jones for 20 years. He said he found Mr. Jones to be a good listener, fair, unbiased, organized, and hard-working, and expressed support for his appointment.

[2:08:10 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR SADDLER, after ascertaining no one else wished to testify, closed public testimony.

[2:08:26 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR FEIGE moved to advance the confirmation of James David Jones, appointee to the Big Game Commercial Services Board to a joint session of the House and Senate for consideration. There being no objection, the confirmation was advanced.

[2:08:59 PM](#)

GENE PELTOLA SR., Appointee, Big Game Commercial Services Board, said he has been a resident of Bethel since the early '60s, and has been president and CEO of the Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation for 24 years. Prior to that, he was president and CEO of the Association of Village Counsel Presidents. As a hunter, fisher, and trapper all his life, Mr. Peltola expressed his interest in using his knowledge and common practical sense to improve resource management in the state.

[2:10:00 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR SADDLER opened public testimony regarding Mr. Peltola.

MR. DICK ROHRER said he knew Mr. Peltola, serving with him on another board for many years, and opined he will be a great representative of the Bethel area and of Western Alaska.

MR. SAM ROHRER, representing APHA, said APHA is in support of Mr. Peltola's appointment to the Big Game Commercial Services Board.

[2:11:28 PM](#)

MR. CHERVENAK, representing the Kodiak Fish and Game Advisory Committee, spoke in support of Mr. Peltola's confirmation.

[2:11:50 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR SADDLER, after ascertaining no one else wished to testify, closed public testimony regarding Mr. Peltola.

[2:11:59 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR FEIGE moved to advance the confirmation of Gene Petola Sr., appointee to the Big Game Commercial Services Board to a joint session of the House and Senate for consideration. There being no objection, the confirmation was advanced.

[2:12:30 PM](#)

HENRY D. TIFFANY IV, Appointee, Big Game Commercial Services Board, informed the committee he is a third generation Alaskan with deep roots and has lived in Fairbanks for many years. He spoke of his family's long connection with the guiding industry, although he is the first licensed big game guide in the family. Mr. Tiffany's guiding experience is over 25 years and he holds a master guide license. He expressed his interest in serving the governor and the industry. His concern is for the industry as a whole, and for issues facing the resources, such as the overcrowding of guides on state land and transporter issues, which need to be addressed in order to ensure that this way of life is available to future generations of Alaskans. His primary areas of guiding expertise are the Interior, the Brooks Range, and the Alaska Peninsula with additional experience in Southeast, Southwest, and Kodiak Island. The business aspect of guiding is important, but the real fun is in year-round guiding in the field, he said. Mr. Tiffany further described his background serving on Big Game Commercial Services Board subcommittees as a proctor for guiding exams, and other board experience.

[2:17:19 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR FEIGE inquired as to the most important characteristic of a successful guiding operation.

MR. TIFFANY responded the first concern needs to be safety on every level.

[2:18:51 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR SADDLER opened public testimony regarding Mr. Tiffany.

[2:19:02 PM](#)

VIRGIL UMPHENOUR, Chair, Fairbanks Fish and Game Advisory Committee, ADFG, said Mr. Tiffany's appointment to the Big Game Commercial Services Board has the full support of the Fairbanks Fish and Game Advisory Committee. Mr. Umphenour disclosed he is

a big game guide and has worked with Mr. Tiffany on issues before the board.

[2:19:44 PM](#)

AL BARRETTE disclosed he is a Class-A Assistant Guide and vice chair of the Fairbanks Fish and Game Advisory Committee, ADFG. Speaking on his own behalf, he said Mr. Tiffany is always well-prepared for meetings and open to discussion, and he urged the committee to support Mr. Tiffany's appointment.

ROBERT FITHIAN disclosed he is a master guide affiliated with the guiding industry in Alaska. He expressed his support of Mr. Tiffany's appointment to the Big Game Commercial Services Board, saying the board has developed high standards for professional guide licensing, and relayed positive aspects of Mr. Tiffany's experience with related associations.

[2:22:19 PM](#)

DANIEL MONTGOMERY disclosed he has been a master guide since 1985, is a 31-year resident of Alaska, and is vice chair of the Matanuska Valley Fish and Game Advisory Committee. Speaking on his own behalf, he said he has known Mr. Tiffany since 2007, and he is very knowledgeable about the guiding industry and its regulations. Mr. Montgomery said Mr. Tiffany is ethical and fair, and he supported his appointment.

MR. DICK ROHRER expressed his strong support of Mr. Tiffany's appointment because he has been thoroughly vetted by the governor's office and by the guiding industry. Mr. Dick Rohrer concurred with the previous testimony regarding Mr. Tiffany.

MR. BUNCH disclosed he is a registered guide and a U.S. Coast Guard rescue swimmer. He said he has worked with Mr. Tiffany and he possesses the highest values of the Alaska guide industry. Speaking from his professional experience, Mr. Bunch strongly agreed with Mr. Tiffany that safety afield is the most important aspect of the guiding industry.

[2:24:42 PM](#)

MR. CHERVENAK disclosed he is an Alaska master guide, and stated his strong support for Mr. Tiffany, saying he is extremely hard-working, and that he concurred with previous testimony regarding Mr. Tiffany.

CO-CHAIR SADDLER closed and re-opened public testimony regarding Mr. Tiffany.

MR. SAM ROHRER, speaking on behalf of APHA, informed the committee of Mr. Tiffany's involvement with the board processes, saying he is thoughtful, articulate, and holds the future of the guiding industry at the forefront. Mr. Rohrer said APHA supports Mr. Tiffany's appointment to the board.

[2:26:02 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR SADDLER closed public testimony regarding Mr. Tiffany.

[2:26:15 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR FEIGE moved to advance the confirmation of Henry Tiffany IV, appointee to the Big Game Commercial Services Board to a joint session of the House and Senate for consideration. There being no objection, the confirmation was advanced.

#### Board of Game

[2:26:29 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR SADDLER announced that the next order of business would be the confirmation hearing of appointees to the Board of Game.

PETER PROBASCO, Appointee, Board of Game, informed the committee he has attended three meetings as a board member filling out a term. He has hunted, trapped, and fished for many years, lived in the Matanuska-Susitna Valley for 47 years, and served in the military. Mr. Probasco enjoys learning more about harvesting game and about the state.

ROD ARNO, Executive Director, Alaska Outdoor Council (AOC), stated AOC has a membership of 48 individual clubs with approximately 9,000 members. Mr. Arno has known Mr. Probasco for 25 years, and AOC appreciates Mr. Probasco's knowledge of the state constitution. The council urges that the committee forward Mr. Probasco's name for consideration.

VIRGIL UMPHENOUR said the Fairbanks Fish and Game Advisory Committee supports the appointment of Mr. Probasco to the Board of Game.

AL BARRETTE said he is a frequent participant in Board of Game meetings and opined Mr. Probasco is well-versed in the issues

and understands state regulations and the state constitution. Mr. Barrette urged for Mr. Probasco's confirmation to the Board of Game.

[2:30:38 PM](#)

DANIEL MONTGOMERY disclosed he is a master guide, a 31-year resident of Alaska, and is vice chair of the Matanuska Valley Fish and Game Advisory Committee. He said he supports Mr. Probasco's reappointment to the board, saying at the Region 2 and Region 4 meetings, he has heard Mr. Probasco explain decisions thoughtfully, and he has a good understanding of game populations and hunting regulations.

ROBERT FITHIAN stated he is in support of Mr. Probasco's reappointment.

PAUL CHERVENAK, Chair, Kodiak Fish and Game Advisory Committee, ADFG, stated his experience with the Board of Game. Mr. Chervenak has heard Mr. Probasco is honest, experienced, and unbiased. He expressed his support for Mr. Probasco's reconfirmation to the Board of Game.

JASON BUNCH stated his support for Mr. Probasco's confirmation.

SAM ROHRER, President, Alaska Professional Hunters Association (APHA), on behalf of APHA, expressed support for Mr. Probasco's appointment to the Board of Game, saying he has demonstrated his ability to be a thoughtful board member who is willing to listen to all sides of an issue before taking a position.

DICK ROHRER found Mr. Probasco very approachable and having an open mind, and was impressed with his performance serving on the board. He said he was in support of Mr. Probasco's confirmation.

[2:34:18 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR SADDLER closed public testimony regarding Peter Probasco.

[2:34:29 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR FEIGE moved to advance the confirmation of Peter Probasco, appointee to the Board of Game to a joint session of the House and Senate for consideration. There being no objection, the confirmation was advanced.

[2:34:57 PM](#)

NATHAN TURNER, Appointee, Board of Game, told the committee he was encouraged to apply to the Board of Game due to his subsistence background and his experience as a big game guide. For the last 23 years, he has made his living from the resources provided by the land - fishing, trapping, guiding, and log-home building - and currently is the only Board of Game board member to do so, and is the only active hunting guide on the board. He said work on the board is rewarding, especially in efforts to maintain and enhance hunting and trapping opportunities. The board is very conscientious and focused on providing more opportunity for Alaskans in every way. Mr. Turner gave a brief history of his introduction to Alaska and to the responsible and respectful use of wild resources, which influences his approach to issues before the Board of Game. One of the primary reasons he wishes to continue on the board is to benefit the public in their use of the resources. In response to Co-Chair Feige, Mr. Turner said he was from 100 miles south of Rochester, New York. His home on the Kantishna River is 30 miles north of Denali National Park & Preserve, with a trapline established in 1926.

[2:39:36 PM](#)

MR. FITHIAN stated Mr. Turner's knowledge of Alaska and its wildlife, social issues, subsistence, trapping, guiding, and respect for all have reached their epitome during his service on the Board of Game, and he supported Mr. Turner's continuation on the board.

MR. MONTGOMERY said in his experience he has observed Mr. Turner to be a well-informed, fair, and valuable member of the board, and he strongly supported Mr. Turner's reappointment to the board.

[2:41:10 PM](#)

GREG ROCZICKA said he has lived in Bethel since the late 1960s and for the past 25 years has been directly involved in resource management issues on regional, state, national, and international levels. Mr. Roczicka served two terms on the Board of Game, and is impressed by Mr. Turner's level of conscientiousness. He opined board members become more effective and knowledgeable during their second term, and urged for confirmation of Mr. Turner's reappointment.

MR. UMPHENOUR said the Fairbanks Fish and Game Advisory Committee supports confirmation of Mr. Turner for reappointment to the Board of Game. Mr. Turner attends the Fairbanks Fish and Game Advisory Committee meetings.

MR. BARRETTE, speaking on his own behalf, disclosed he is the vice chair of the Fairbanks Fish and Game Advisory Committee and in that capacity deals with the Board of Game. Mr. Turner is an active participant of the board at the subcommittee level, and is always well-prepared and respectful; in fact, Mr. Turner's attendance at advisory committee meetings ensures his understanding of local issues. Mr. Barrette asked the committee to confirm Mr. Turner to the Board of Game.

[2:46:12 PM](#)

MR. DICK ROHRER said he was a long-time resident of Kodiak and spent many years attending Board of Game meetings while representing the Kodiak Fish and Game Advisory Committee. He has found Mr. Turner to be honest and approachable and said he provides a unique perspective to the board. Mr. Dick Rohrer stressed that Mr. Turner is unbiased.

MR. SAM ROHRER said APHA strongly supports Mr. Turner's reappointment to the Board of Game, pointing out the challenge of appointing those who can successfully navigate the complex and contentious issues raised. A board member must be willing to weigh all sides of a proposal, and consider all implications, as Mr. Turner has demonstrated over the last three years. Mr. Turner is willing to look at all sides of an issue and carefully consider the views of all, while ultimately considering the long-term health of the resource. His background allows him to relate to various user groups who present to the board. For these reasons, APHA highly recommends that the committee confirm Mr. Turner's reappointment to the board.

MR. BUNCH stated he has worked with Mr. Turner on subcommittees and described him as an exceptional mentor who is honest, open minded, humble, and committed to doing what is best for Alaska's resources. Mr. Bunch supported Mr. Turner's reconfirmation to the Board of Game.

MR. CHERVENAK said he is an 18-year member of the Kodiak Fish and Game Advisory Committee who has experience with board members while representing Kodiak at Board of Game meetings. He expressed his strong support of Mr. Turner's confirmation for reappointment to the Board of Game because he finds him to be

approachable, articulate, unemotional, respectful, a good listener, fair, and unbiased. Mr. Turner also brings valuable personal experience to the board.

[2:51:40 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR SADDLER, after ascertaining that no one else wished to testify, closed public testimony regarding Mr. Turner.

[2:52:05 PM](#)

CO-CHAIR FEIGE moved to advance the confirmation of Nathan Turner, appointee to the Board of Game to a joint session of the House and Senate for consideration. There being no objection, the confirmation was advanced.

CO-CHAIR SADDLER thanked each of the appointees for their willingness to serve on boards that are very important to the life, culture, and business activities of Alaska, and also thanked those who testified. He reminded the appointees and the public that the forwarding of an appointee's name to the full joint session does not reflect the intent of any member to vote for or against the individual during further sessions for the purposes of confirmation.

[2:53:08 PM](#)

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business before the committee, the House Resources Standing Committee meeting was adjourned at 2:53 p.m.