

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
SENATE RESOURCES STANDING COMMITTEE**

April 25, 2025

3:30 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Senator Cathy Giessel, Chair
Senator Bill Wielechowski, Vice Chair
Senator Matt Claman
Senator Forrest Dunbar
Senator Scott Kawasaki
Senator Shelley Hughes

MEMBERS ABSENT

Senator Robert Myers

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

SENATE BILL NO. 176

"An Act approving and ratifying the sale of royalty oil by the State of Alaska to Marathon Petroleum Supply and Trading Company LLC; and providing for an effective date."

- MOVED SB 176 OUT OF COMMITTEE

SENATE BILL NO. 180

"An Act relating to the regulation of liquefied natural gas import facilities by the Regulatory Commission of Alaska."

- HEARD & HELD

CONFIRMATION HEARING(S): BOARD OF GAME

- HEARD

CONFIRMATION HEARING(S): ALASKA COMMERCIAL FISHERIES ENTRY COMMISSION

- HEARD

CONFIRMATION HEARING(S): BOARD OF FISHERIES

- HEARD

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

BILL: SB 176

SHORT TITLE: APPROVE MARATHON PETRO ROYALTY OIL SALE

SPONSOR(s): RULES BY REQUEST OF THE GOVERNOR

04/15/25	(S)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
04/15/25	(S)	RES, FIN
04/23/25	(S)	RES AT 3:30 PM BUTROVICH 205
04/23/25	(S)	Heard & Held
04/23/25	(S)	MINUTE(RES)
04/25/25	(S)	RES AT 3:30 PM BUTROVICH 205

BILL: SB 180

SHORT TITLE: LNG IMPORT FACILITIES

SPONSOR(s): RESOURCES

04/22/25	(S)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
04/22/25	(S)	RES, L&C
04/25/25	(S)	RES AT 3:30 PM BUTROVICH 205

WITNESS REGISTER

RYAN FITZPATRICK, Commercial Manager
Division of Oil and Gas
Department of Natural Resources (DNR)
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Provided an overview of SB 176 on behalf of the administration.

CASEY SULLIVAN, Government and Public Affairs Manager
Marathon Petroleum Corporation
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of SB 176.

INTIMAYO HARBISON, Staff
Senator Cathy Giessel
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Answered questions on SB 180 on behalf of the Senate Resources Committee, Senator Giessel, Chair.

AL BARRETTE, Appointee
Board of Game
Fairbanks, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified as the governor's appointee to the Board of Game.

VIRGIL UMPENHOUR, representing self
North Pole, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of the appointment of Mr. Barrette to the Board of Game.

CARRI ANN MUELLER, Appointee
Board of Game
Palmer, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified as the governor's appointee to the Board of Game.

MARK RICHARDS, Executive Director
Resident Hunters of Alaska
Fairbanks, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of the appointments of Ms. Mueller and Mr. Barrette to the Board of Game.

RICK GREEN, Appointee
Alaska Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified as the governor's appointee to the Alaska Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission.

THOMAS CARPENTER, Appointee
Board of Fisheries
Cordova, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified as the governor's appointee to the Board of Fisheries.

BOB MURPHY, representing self
Kodiak, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of the appointment of Mr. Carpenter to the Board of Fisheries.

DAN MACDONALD, representing self
Bellingham, Washington

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of the appointment of Mr. Carpenter to the Board of Fisheries.

STEVE BROWN, President
Concerned Area M Fishermen
Homer, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of the appointment of Mr. Carpenter to the Board of Fisheries.

ROBERT HEYANO, representing self

Dillingham, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of the appointment of Mr. Carpenter to the Board of Fisheries.

ACTION NARRATIVE

[3:30:50 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL called the Senate Resources Standing Committee meeting to order at 3:30 p.m. Present at the call to order were Senators Dunbar, Kawasaki, Claman, and Chair Giessel. Senators Wielechowski and Hughes arrived thereafter.

SB 176-APPROVE MARATHON PETRO ROYALTY OIL SALE

[3:31:38 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL announced the consideration of SENATE BILL NO. 176 "An Act approving and ratifying the sale of royalty oil by the State of Alaska to Marathon Petroleum Supply and Trading Company LLC; and providing for an effective date."

[3:32:04 PM](#)

RYAN FITZPATRICK, Commercial Manager, Division of Oil and Gas, Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Juneau, Alaska, said SB 176 would approve the sale of Alaska's royalty oil to Marathon Petroleum Corporation. He explained that DNR negotiates contracts with in-state refiners for the sale of Alaska's royalty oil in-kind to those refineries. The contracts go through a public process, a best interest finding (DNR), a Royalty Board review, and approval by the legislature.

[3:33:00 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL opened public testimony on SB 176.

[3:33:18 PM](#)

CASEY SULLIVAN, Government and Public Affairs Manager, Marathon Petroleum Corporation, Anchorage, Alaska, testified in support of SB 176. He said the availability, flexibility, and stability of the contract would have a positive impact on Marathon Petroleum Corporation's (Marathon) ability to optimize ongoing operations. He said that Marathon's Kenai refinery is one of the longest in-state manufacturers producing quality transportation fuel. The facility can produce up to 60 thousand barrels of crude oil per calendar day. The refinery primarily produces gasoline, jet fuel, diesel, and other products such as propane and asphalt. These are distributed from Nikiski to North Pole and beyond, through terminals at Kenai, North Pole, and the Port of Alaska. Marathon employes over 300 Alaskans. He stated that

SB 176 would ratify the new proposed contract, which is the result of positive negotiations between Marathon and DNR. He expressed appreciation for the professionalism of DNR throughout the process. He opined that the contract, which would allow Marathon to purchase oil at a premium, is a win for both Marathon and the State of Alaska. He said Marathon is committed to continuing its legacy of safely and reliably producing quality fuel products.

[3:33:31 PM](#)

SENATOR WIELECHOWSKI joined the meeting.

[3:35:31 PM](#)

SENATOR CLAMAN noted that SB 176 includes a three-year contract with 7 one-year extension options, which is a ten-year proposal. He asked if Marathon has had similar contracts in the past or whether contracts are typically a shorter duration.

[3:36:00 PM](#)

MR. SULLIVAN replied that contract times have generally been three to five-years; however, Marathon contracts have previously utilized the one-year extensions. He stated that the extensions have proved very useful and provide increased flexibility. He clarified that, while Marathon has had contracts for more than 5 years, none have reached 10 years.

[3:36:49 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL closed public testimony on SB 176.

[3:36:58 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL solicited the will of the committee.

[3:37:01 PM](#)

SENATOR WIELECHOWSKI moved to report SB 176, work order 34-GS1086\A, from committee with individual recommendations and attached fiscal note(s). He gave authorization for Legislative Legal Services to make technical and conforming changes.

[3:37:16 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL found no objection and SB 176 was reported from the Senate Resources Standing Committee.

SB 180-LNG IMPORT FACILITIES

[3:37:27 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL announced the consideration of SENATE BILL NO. 180 "An Act relating to the regulation of liquefied natural gas import facilities by the Regulatory Commission of Alaska."

[3:40:18 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL said that SB 180 repeals AS 42.05.711(v). She explained that this would return the authority to regulate the import of liquefied natural gas (LNG) to the Regulatory Commission of Alaska (RCA). She stated that the legislature repealed this authority during the previous legislative session. She presented the sectional analysis for SB 180:

[Original punctuation provided.]

Senate Bill 180 (version A)
Sectional Analysis

Section 1: Repeals AS 42.05.711(v)

AS 42.05.711(v) a liquefied natural gas import facility under the jurisdiction of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission is exempt from this chapter.

CHAIR GIESSEL explained that AS 42.05 addresses the RCA. She said that SB 180 is necessary to ensure consumer protection. She stated that RCA regulates the rates that energy utilities can charge. SB 180 does not expand the jurisdiction of RCA to a privately held import terminal; rather, it clarifies RCA jurisdiction over certificated utilities' gas-supply contracts from an LNG import terminal. SB 180 would treat those gas supply contracts the same as supply contracts from any Cook Inlet producer. She said that prior to the addition of AS 42.05.711(v) (which gives the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) jurisdiction), RCA had the authority to regulate the import of LNG. She clarified that FERC has authorization to regulate the facilities, not the price of the commodity. Therefore, the addition of AS 42.05.711(v) has created confusion.

[3:40:37 PM](#)

INTIMAYO HARBISON, Staff, Senator Cathy Giessel, Alaska State Legislature, Juneau, Alaska, introduced himself.

[3:40:52 PM](#)

SENATOR CLAMAN sought confirmation of his understanding that RCA would not regulate LNG import facilities; however, RCA would regulate the sale of LNG supplied through those import facilities to energy utilities throughout the state.

[3:41:25 PM](#)

MR. HARBISON confirmed this understanding.

[3:41:31 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL shared that RCA recently oversaw -and denied- a request from Enstar Natural Gas (Enstar) that would have increased the price on imported LNG. She emphasized that consumer protection is the function of RCA. She explained that FERC already has jurisdiction over the facilities and the insertion of AS 42.05.711(v) at the end of the previous legislative session created confusion about RCA's jurisdiction over the cost of the commodity.

[3:42:43 PM](#)

SENATOR DUNBAR asked for confirmation that the legislature approved this provision during the previous legislative session.

SENATOR GIESSEL confirmed this understanding.

SENATOR DUNBAR stated that he could not recall legislation that dealt with this specific issue and surmised that it was part of a broader package. He wondered why the legislature made the change and asked for additional information.

[3:43:20 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL explained that the Senate Finance Committee added the provision to House Bill 50, which related to carbon sequestration. She noted that the Senate Finance Committee did not hold discussion on the provision.

[3:43:56 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL held SB 180 in committee.

CONFIRMATION HEARING(S) : BOARD OF GAME

[3:44:08 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL announced the consideration of the governor's appointees Al Barrette and Carri Ann Mueller to the Board of Game.

CHAIR GIESSEL provided an overview of the Board of Game. The board is made up of seven members, appointed by the governor. Appointees are chosen based on an interest in public affairs, good judgement, knowledge, and ability in the field of action of the board. The function of the Board of Game is conservation and development of game resources. Board members are compensated at

an executive range 29(a) (\$40.13/hour) for regulatory meetings. Other meetings are compensated at half of this amount. She noted that Mr. Barrette is a reappointment to the board.

3:46:03 PM

AL BARRETTE, Appointee, Board of Game, Fairbanks, Alaska, gave a brief overview of his employment history. He said that, if reappointed to the Board of Game, he would continue to provide historical background to many wildlife issues across the state. He stated that he is able to apply his knowledge of conservation biology and subsistence alongside the Constitution of the State of Alaska and Alaska Statutes. He emphasized his understanding of urban and rural issues. He opined that the best part of board meetings is public and advisory personal testimony, which brings new perspectives and knowledge to the issues under consideration. This can include background information and cultural information provided by indigenous elders. It can also include users' field observations as well as observations from non-consumptive users.

MR. BARRATTE said that, as a board member, he is available for discussions with those who have issues or want to learn, and he attends many advisory committee meetings. He said that social issues are the most difficult, as those decisions are related to the impact of human-to-human interactions rather than science. He emphasized that his decisions are based on science and/or the best data available. He said that, if approved as a member of the board, he would continue to listen and learn. He stated that he supports the best process of regulating, providing, managing, and allocating wildlife resources for both consumptive and non-consumptive users, and making decisions using the best data available. He stated that this would provide the opportunity for future generations to utilize these resources.

3:49:25 PM

CHAIR GIESSEL opened public testimony on the appointment of Mr. Barrett to the Board of Game.

3:49:52 PM

VIRGIL UMPENHOUR, representing self, North Pole, Alaska, testified in support of the appointment of Mr. Barrette to the Board of Game. He said he owns a meat and fish processing business in Fairbanks and is a master hunting guide. He shared that he has known Mr. Barrette for over 20 years and has worked with him in several capacities - including service on the Fairbanks Fish and Game Advisory Committee. He said that Mr.

Barrette is knowledgeable, a problem-solver, a good listener, and is highly focused on resource conservation.

3:52:37 PM

CHAIR GIESSEL invited the governor's appointee to the Board of Game, Carri Ann Mueller, to introduce herself and tell the committee why she would like to serve on the board.

3:53:08 PM

CARRI ANN MUELLER, Appointee, Board of Game, Palmer, Alaska, expressed her interest, qualifications, and desire to serve on the Board of Game as a wildlife resource. She noted that the Board of Game provides an open and public process for the State of Alaska's wildlife regulatory system. She shared her belief that public involvement is critical for wildlife education, awareness, and management. She shared a brief overview of her personal experience as it relates to the Board. She highlighted work experience in the outdoor industry and noted that her work is primarily focused on promoting outdoor adventure, fishing, hunting, travel, and tourism in Alaska. She said she has dedicated time to learning about the various cultures around the state. She said she has developed a passion for understanding the different cultures and ways of life - and how different cultures utilize Alaska's wildlife resources.

MS. MUELLER said that she has served on a variety of boards. She has also volunteered time, fundraising for various nonprofit programs related to conservation, education, and the Alaska outdoor lifestyle. She said she has been volunteering with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) for many years. She briefly described her volunteer work, which included helping with various ADF&G youth programs. She has also volunteered with the Alaska Wildlife Conservation Center. She recently became an instructor with ADF&G for the Alaska Hunter Education Course and the Becoming an Outdoors-women (BOW) program. She said she mentors women in a mountain biking group and shared that this led to the creation of a women's hunting group. The women's hunting group encourages new hunters and build confidence through wilderness education and safety. She said she has hunted in 14 of the state's 26 game units and briefly described the various transport and guide services utilized. She expressed her commitment to following the scientific data provided by ADF&G biologists and staff, listening to input from Alaska wildlife troopers, and working with the 82 advisory committees across the state. She stated that Alaskans and user groups that enjoy the outdoors are of primary importance to the Board of Game.

[3:57:38 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL opened public testimony on the appointment of Ms. Mueller to the Board of Game.

[3:58:06 PM](#)

MARK RICHARDS, Executive Director, Resident Hunters of Alaska, Fairbanks, Alaska, testified in support of the appointments of Ms. Mueller and Mr. Barrette to the Board of Game. He said that Resident Hunters of Alaska previously recommended Ms. Mueller for a board position and expressed confidence in her abilities. He stated that Ms. Mueller's work as a pilot has given her a firsthand look at issues across the state. He stated that Ms. Mueller would be an asset to the Board of Game and would advocate for Alaskan hunters and wildlife. He turned his attention to Mr. Barrette and stated that he served with Mr. Barrette on the Fairbanks Advisory Committee. He noted that there are many guides on the Board of Game and emphasized that, while Resident Hunters of Alaska (RHA) does not support adding additional guides to the board, RHA is in support of Mr. Barrette maintaining his seat on the board. He expressed confidence in Mr. Barrette's abilities and said he is an asset to the board.

[4:00:06 PM](#)

SENATOR HUGHES joined the meeting.

[4:00:22 PM](#)

SENATOR DUNBAR asked Mr. Barrette to provide examples of the social issues that come before the Board of Game.

[4:00:49 PM](#)

MR. BARRETTE said that the board recently had a meeting to address non-resident deer hunting in Kodiak. He explained that at that time, the board limited non-residents to one buck per year. He briefly explained how the issue came about, noting that commercial fishing has faced challenges in recent years. Some fishermen have chosen to transition their fishing boats into transport vessels, transporting hunters for drop-off hunting. Some boats transport more than 60 hunters during the season. This forced Kodiak residents to travel farther into the bush to harvest deer. He explained that this is a social issue because the deer numbers can sustain the additional harvest; however, the impact on residents is the primary concern.

[4:02:48 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL closed public testimony on the appointments of Ms. Mueller and Mr. Barrette to the Board of Game.

CONFIRMATION HEARING(S) : STATE ASSESSMENT REVIEW BOARD

[4:03:09 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL announced the consideration of the governor's appointee Samuel Laffey to the State Assessment Review Board.

CHAIR GIESSEL provided an overview of the State Assessment Review Board. The board has five members, each knowledgeable in assessment procedures for the pipeline transportation of gas or unrefined oil. The board conducts oil and gas assessment appeal hearings on values set by the Board of Revenue. The compensation for the board is per diem.

[4:05:18 PM](#)

At ease.

[4:05:39 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL reconvened the meeting. She explained that, due to a technical difficulty, the connection to the appointee was unsuccessful. She stated her intention to continue to the next appointee and return to Mr. Laffey at a later time.

**CONFIRMATION HEARING(S) : ALASKA COMMERCIAL FISHERIES ENTRY
COMMISSION**

[4:05:59 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL announced the consideration of the governor's appointee Rick Green to the Alaska Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission.

CHAIR GIESSEL provided a brief overview of the Alaska Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission (CFEC). She stated that, while there are only two members on the commission, it is a substantial job. A quorum consists of both members. Candidates must have a broad range of professional experience. They must not have a vested economic interest in entry permits, fishing gear, etc. The board promotes conservation and sustained yield management of fishery resources and regulates the entry into commercial fisheries. The Salary is equal to an executive range 25 (\$4,211 biweekly).

[4:07:33 PM](#)

RICK GREEN, Appointee, Alaska Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission, Anchorage, Alaska, said he has served as commissioner on the Alaska Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission (CFEC) since July of 2024. He shared briefly about his call to public service, which occurred when he experienced a heart

attack. He expressed appreciation to committee members, their sacrifices, and their commitment to Alaska.

4:09:07 PM

MR GREEN shared his history with the fishing industry, which began in childhood and includes work as a fishing guide. He served a three-year term on the Anchorage Fish & Game Advisory Committee and volunteered with ADF&G for roughly 30 years. He said that he has been a subsistence fisherman and guide but has not done commercial fishing. He said that he served 6 years as a special assistant to the commissioner of ADF&G. He expressed strong support for ADF&G Commissioner Doug Vincent-Lang. He shared that he was preparing for retirement when the CFEC position opened. He noted a lack of qualified applicants at that time. He recognized that his qualifications made him a good candidate and applied for the position. He indicated that he is willing to commit to a 4-year term, at minimum. He is dedicated to furthering the work of staff and the mission of FERC.

4:11:48 PM

SENATOR WIELECHOWSKI asked about a past report from the Alaska Division of Legislative Audit that recommended merging FERC with ADF&G. He recalled a large backlog of cases at that time. He noted that the State of Alaska is experiencing budget constraints and asked if there is a reason the legislature should not merge the two entities.

4:12:16 PM

MR. GREEN replied that this is a legislative decision. He added that, if the legislature approved the change, he would assist with that transition. He noted that FERC brings in nearly \$7 million and costs roughly \$3.5 million. He pointed out that FERC gives money to the Fishermen's Fund and the ADF&G Commercial Fishing Division. He reiterated that he would help to merge FERC with ADF&G, should the legislature approve that change.

4:12:49 PM

SENATOR WIELECHOWSKI asked about the workload for the commission.

4:13:08 PM

MR. GREEN said he and Glen Haight have exhausted the backlog of cases. He noted that FERC is currently working to modernize the website. This will make the agency more accessible for commercial fishermen and anyone who wants data.

4:14:07 PM

SENATOR WIELECHOWSKI shared his understanding that the proposed merger of FERC into ADF&G is about creating greater efficiency. He asked about areas of efficiency within the commission.

[4:14:19 PM](#)

MR. GREEN said he could provide this information and expressed a willingness to work with the legislature on these issues.

[4:14:32 PM](#)

SENATOR CLAMAN noted Mr. Green's career as talk radio host, a role in which he primarily expressed his own opinions. He pointed out that a FERC commissioner must both have opinions and be open to the information and issues presented. He asked how Mr. Green would assure the public that he is not simply acting in his role of "talk show host" but is gathering information and making sound decisions based on the available evidence.

[4:15:11 PM](#)

MR. GREEN replied that working as a talk radio host was one of many jobs over the course of his career. He emphasized that he works hard at every job - though not all his jobs have been as public facing as his radio work. He stated that Alaska's fishery resources are very important and emphasized his dedication to the mission of ADF&G as it is extended through FERC. He said he manages on sustained yield principles and shared that he also has an interest in the economics aspect.

[4:16:31 PM](#)

SENATOR CLAMAN offered a brief comment about Mr. Green's radio show.

[4:16:44 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL opened public testimony on the appointment of Mr. Green to the Alaska Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission; finding none, she closed public testimony.

CONFIRMATION HEARING(S) : BOARD OF FISHERIES

[4:17:58 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL announced the consideration of the governor's appointee Thomas Carpenter to the Board of Fisheries.

CHAIR GIESSEL gave a brief overview of the Board of Fisheries. The board is a regulatory body; the function of the board is related to the conservation and development of fishery resources. There are seven board members, chosen based on their interest in public affairs, good judgement, knowledge, and

ability in the field of action of the board. Board members work with the commissioner of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G). The Board of Fisheries meets 4-5 times/year, for a total of 33-45 days/year. She commented that this is a substantial commitment. The compensation for board meetings is an executive range 20(a) (approximately \$40/hour for board meetings). Board members receive half of this for attending non-board meetings.

[4:19:38 PM](#)

THOMAS CARPENTER, Appointee, Board of Fisheries, Cordova, Alaska, said he has served as the vice chair of the Board of Fisheries. He briefly described his duties as vice chair and commented on the importance of that role. He said board meetings can be long, sometimes running up to two weeks. The vice chair is responsible for ensuring that meetings run smoothly, making necessary motions, etc. He said he was also the chair of the Herring Revitalization Committee. The committee held several meetings around the state. He explained that, due to market conditions, herring is an underutilized resource. The committee considered potential opportunities that would create opportunities for the fishing community while protecting subsistence fisheries. He said he served on the Alaska Salmon Research Task Force in 2024. He said this task force brought together a diverse group to consider research needs around the state. He shared his belief that this was a productive task force and expressed hope that the findings would bring about positive change.

[4:22:09 PM](#)

MR. CARPENTER briefly discussed the reason he sought reappointment to the Board of Fisheries. He said that his experience on the board has been diverse. He noted the high workload (which can include hundreds or thousands of pages of reading) and emphasized that he does not consider this to be a burden. He said that there is always more to learn, and the reading requirement helps him to make informed decisions. He said that reading public comments gives voice to the diverse perspectives around the state. He stated that he believes in compromise and shared his goal of bringing different user groups together to try and find solutions to problems that impact many Alaskans.

MR. CARPENTER provided examples of some of the projects he worked on during his time on the board. He briefly discussed efforts to rebuild king salmon populations on the Nushagak River. He explained that it is difficult for managers to

negotiate the return of millions of sockeye salmon and tens of thousands of king salmon. The board worked with the Department of Fish and Game to come up with a solution. He shared his belief that the plan would show dividends over the next few years.

[4:24:39 PM](#)

MR. CARPENTER turned his attention to herring and shared that he suggested substitute language based on input from subsistence and commercial users. The board passed the changes, which created new opportunities for users to explore different markets. This will benefit fishermen while also protecting subsistence users. He shared his belief that there is more work to be done on the Board of Fisheries and stated that he is able to dedicate the time required. He said he has a broad knowledge base of the different fisheries, and this aids the board's discussions with the public. He is also the only board member currently living on coastal Alaska.

[4:26:20 PM](#)

SENATOR KAWASAKI directed attention to a letter from the Fairbanks Fish and Game Advisory Committee regarding concerns about his reappointment. He said that the concerns are related to comments [Mr. Carpenter] made regarding hatchery production and a potential reluctance to consider peer-reviewed scientific data. He asked Mr. Carpenter for comment.

[4:27:11 PM](#)

MR. CARPENTER said that he has not read the letter in question and could not respond to its contents. However, he said he has a long history with and an extensive understanding of hatchery systems statewide. He was also a member and chair of the regional planning team, which worked with ADF&G to regulate Alaska's hatchery program. He disagreed that he is reluctant to consider peer-reviewed studies related to hatcheries and use those studies as evidence for decision-making. He stated that there are many types of peer-reviewed studies and combing through them can be difficult, as the language is often technical. He said he tries to read as many peer-reviewed studies as possible. He said that he most often relies on ADF&G for education and science-based information related to hatchery production and the potential effects this could have on the overall environment. He opined that he is very open-minded [when it comes to hatchery production]; however, he indicated that the evidence remains unclear. He indicated that he continues to seek out clear, factual evidence related to hatcheries to broaden his understanding.

[4:29:09 PM](#)

SENATOR KAWASAKI said the Arctic Affairs Committee recently discussed salmon bycatch in pollock fisheries. He briefly discussed one theory, which involves large numbers of hatchery salmon (from Russia and China) intercepted in state waters. He said that he is aware of several studies. He said he would provide those to Mr. Carpenter and would welcome his feedback.

[4:30:12 PM](#)

MR. CARPENTER stated that he would be willing to read and discuss the studies. He opined that this is important information. He said that up to 93-94 percent of fish harvested as bycatch in the Bering Sea (or other fisheries) are from Japan and Russia. He commented that the Board of Fisheries does not have much control over that; however, he opined that this - and the impacts that it has on Alaska's fisheries - is important for the board to consider when making decisions. He reiterated that he is open to discussing this further.

[4:31:08 PM](#)

SENATOR WIELECHOWSKI said the Board of Fisheries faces difficult decisions and has a large workload. He said he would like Mr. Carpenter to address concerns. The first is regarding the Copper River dipnet fishery proposal in Chitina. He briefly explained the concerns and said that the proposal would move the boat dipnet boundary location. He quoted Mr. Carpenter's remarks during those discussions and asked him to explain the rationale for his comment that "this is an allocative grab, plain and simple."

[4:32:40 PM](#)

MR. CARPENTER recalled the meeting. He said it was a difficult meeting. He said he understands the safety concerns; however, he said he has expansive knowledge of the Copper River. He said the river is fully utilized both for sockeye and king salmon. He described the Copper River as a bright spot for king salmon in Alaska. He said he voted to try and conserve king salmon in the commercial fishery. He surmised that his fellow Cordova residents were surprised by how he voted. With respect to the question of the Copper River dipnet fishery at Chitina, he explained that he did not see evidence that conservation was necessary.

[4:34:45 PM](#)

SENATOR WIELECHOWSKI asked for clarification. He asked what Mr. Carpenter meant when he referred to it as an "allocated issue."

[4:34:56 PM](#)

MR. CARPENTER replied that creating a larger fishing area within a fishery, there is greater harvest potential. He explained that when the fishery is fully utilized for commercial, personal, and subsistence users, providing more area to one user group in an attempt to increase that group's harvest rates is allocative.

[4:35:38 PM](#)

SENATOR WIELECHOWSKI noted concerns related to conflicts on the board. He asked how Mr. Carpenter defines a "substantial financial interest" for purposes of a conflict of interest.

[4:36:01 PM](#)

MR. CARPENTER replied that he does not personally have any conflicts of interest. He acknowledged that not everyone can do that, and some appointees have had financial conflicts of interest. He said that this most often relates to owned permits in a particular area under discussion. He stated that he supports the idea that those individuals should not vote if they have a conflict of interest. However, he stated that their involvement in deliberations is important, as they are often more knowledgeable about the nuances of that fishery than other board members. He said the board follows the legislature's guidelines with respect to conflicts of interest. He said that the dollar value related to the conflict is left up to the chair. He briefly discussed this process and said it is a broad decision-making tool. He clarified that there is nothing set in stone.

[4:38:46 PM](#)

SENATOR WIELECHOWSKI said that according to Alaska law, a "substantial financial interest" is a conflict of interest. He said he is aware of cases in which individuals with a \$15,000 to \$20,000 financial interest have been deemed conflicted out. He shared his understanding that Mr. Carpenter voted against conflicting those individuals out because he did not consider the amount to be a substantial financial interest. Given that information, he asked what Mr. Carpenter would consider a significant financial interest.

[4:39:31 PM](#)

MR. CARPENTER could not recall making that statement on the record. He briefly discussed precedent with the Board of Fisheries. He recalled that the precedent for a conflict of interest is anything over \$5,000. He noted that the bar is different for each chairman. He emphasized the importance of

considering precedent and reiterated that each chairman interprets this differently.

4:40:41 PM

SENATOR WIELECHOWSKI expressed appreciation for Mr. Carpenter's testimony. He directed attention to a letter from the Alaska Outdoor Council that opposed Mr. Carpenter's reappointment. The letter referred to Proposal 14, which would close the pollack trawl fishery in Prince William Sound until trawlers could ensure the gear would not reach the sea floor. The letter stated that Mr. Carpenter submitted substitute language to the following proposal (15) that stopped proposal 14 and expanded the trawling to two more sections of Prince William Sound. He explained AOC expressed concern regarding Mr. Carpenter's dedication to the Board of Fisheries' constitutional obligation to conserve Alaska's fisheries. He asked Mr. Carpenter to comment.

4:41:52 PM

MR. CARPENTER recalled that the proposals were presented at a meeting in Cordova in December of 2024. He could not recall the specific language he introduced but suggested that the letter from AOC was somewhat inaccurate. He stated that Prince William Sound is the state's only trawl fishery. He noted that it is a small fishery and most of the trawl fisheries in Alaska are in federal waters. He indicated that it is important to keep trawlers off the sea floor. However, he said it is difficult for the board to mandate this. He explained that monitoring is an issue, as the board does not have the necessary authority.

MR. CARPENTER briefly explained what happened with respect to the proposals mentioned by Senator Wielechowski. He said that the Prince Williams Sound regulations state that only 70 percent of the pollock allocation can be harvested in one of three areas. This creates problems related to bycatch, including king salmon and rockfish. He said the department did not have the authority to allow continued harvest in an area with lower numbers. He said that his proposed substitute language gave the department flexibility to allow trawling in one of the three areas while also allowing the department to direct that activity to the area that would be least effected by bycatch. He opined that this was an intelligent, conservation-minded decision.

4:44:26 PM

SENATOR DUNBAR asked if Mr. Carpenter has been following the various measures to preserve Alaska's commercial fishing industry and support coastal Alaska that are currently before

the legislature. He asked if Mr. Carpenter has any thoughts about what the legislature can do to preserve fishing industry jobs along coastal Alaska.

[4:45:44 PM](#)

MR. CARPENTER replied that he tracks the by-catch committee and legislative activities related to the seafood industry. He noted the high expense of doing business in 2025 and surmised that the high costs will continue - particularly in remote locations. He said that many remote locations have seen closures and consolidation due to high costs. He said creating regulatory language that allows communities to increase productivity while conserving resources is important. He opined that this provides stability to coastal communities and the industry. He said that, as a board member, this is something he always considers.

[4:47:03 PM](#)

SENATOR KAWASAKI referred to Proposal 70 and explained that it would increase the area where boats were allowed to drift. He briefly described this process. He explained that [Proposal 70] requested an increase of less than half a mile, to allow certain boats to dipnet in that area. He stated that Mr. Carpenter voted in favor of Proposal 70. He requested clarification of Mr. Carpenter's earlier comments regarding allocative decisions.

[4:48:24 PM](#)

MR. CARPENTER replied that he considers a fully utilized location to be a fully allocated resource. He said many rivers around the state are fully utilized. He pointed out the different fisheries: commercial, personal use, and subsistence. He said that people can choose to use the dipnet or subsistence areas. He offered a commercial fishing example to illustrate how adjusting the fishery area takes area from one fishery and adds it to another fishery. He said this is allocative in the sense that the larger the transferred area, the more fish is (potentially) taken from one user group and given to another. He explained that there was also a safety issue that guided his decision-making in that case. He said that it would be easier to explain with a map or chart to illustrate his reasoning.

[4:51:06 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL opened public testimony on the governor's appointment of Thomas Carpenter to the Board of Fisheries.

[4:51:30 PM](#)

BOB MURPHY, representing self, Kodiak, Alaska, testified in support of the appointment of Thomas Carpenter to the Board of

Fisheries. He said he is a commercial fisherman and has been involved with the Board of Fisheries process for 35 years. He stated that Mr. Carpenter is knowledgeable about subsistence, sport, commercial, and personal use fisheries throughout the state. He said Mr. Carpenter's knowledge and previous board experience make him an asset. He commented that Mr. Carpenter is approachable, willing, and able to listen to user concerns and make informed, science-based decisions on difficult issues. He reiterated his support of Mr. Carpenter's reappointment.

[4:52:58 PM](#)

DAN MACDONALD, representing self, Bellingham, Washington, testified in support of the appointment of Thomas Carpenter to the Board of Fisheries. He said he is a lifelong commercial fisherman and has held an Alaskan fishing permit for roughly 46 years. He briefly shared about his experience with the Board of Fisheries and Mr. Carpenter. He shared an anecdote to illustrate Mr. Carpenter's ability to mediate and help resolve conflicts, leading to compromise on important issues. He said Mr. Carpenter is an excellent mediator who understands the issues that come before the board. He said he has not seen a better candidate.

[4:55:37 PM](#)

STEVE BROWN, President, Concerned Area M Fishermen, Homer, Alaska, testified in support of the appointment of Thomas Carpenter to the Board of Fisheries. He gave a brief overview of Concerned Area M Fishermen, whose members live throughout the state. He said he has attended and participated in Board of Fisheries meetings for 30 years. He contrasted board members who prepare for meetings (e.g. have read all proposals, department reports, and other background materials) with those who do not. He stated that Mr. Carpenter is among the former. He added that Mr. Carpenter is fair, approachable, available for dialogue, and listens to the public. He said Mr. Carpenter seems to make evidence-based decisions and opined that this is a good characteristic to have one a board where many issues can become emotional. He commented on the benefits that come from serving multiple board terms, which provides experience and familiarity.

[4:57:53 PM](#)

ROBERT HEYANO, representing self, Dillingham, Alaska, testified in support of the appointment of Thomas Carpenter to the Board of Fisheries. He said he has been a commercial fisherman in Bristol Bay for over 50 years. He stated that Mr. Carpenter is familiar with the issues that come before the board. Mr. Carpenter can successfully work with different groups to find common solutions and has demonstrated leadership abilities. He

added that Mr. Carpenter's previous experience in the commercial fishery gives him a better understanding of the issues and is an asset to the Board of Fisheries.

[4:59:03 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL closed public testimony on the governor's appointment of Thomas Carpenter to the Board of Fisheries.

[4:59:15 PM](#)

CHAIR GIESSEL solicited the will of the committee.

[4:59:22 PM](#)

SENATOR WIELECHOWSKI stated that [in accordance with AS 39.05.080,] the Senate Resources Standing Committee reviewed the following and recommends the appointments be advanced to a joint session for consideration:

Board of Game

Allen Barrette - Fairbanks
Carrie Ann Mueller - Palmer

Alaska Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission

Rick Green - Anchorage

Board of Fisheries

Thomas Carpenter - Cordova

SENATOR WIELECHOWSKI reminded members that signing the report(s) regarding appointments to boards and commissions in no way reflects individual members' approval or disapproval of the appointees; the nominations are merely advanced to the full legislature for confirmation or rejection.

CHAIR GIESSEL stated that the remaining appointees would be considered at the next hearing of the Senate Resources Standing Committee.

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[5:00:29 PM](#)

There being no further business to come before the committee, Chair Giessel adjourned the Senate Resources Standing Committee meeting at 5:00 p.m.