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Thank you for submitting a proposal to Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Boards Division.

Please save the Log Number below for future reference.

**LOG NUMBER: EJ-F23-621**

**DETAILS:**

Management Unit or Area (if applicable):

Topic (if applicable):

Additional Topics (if applicable):

Meeting Name: None

AAC: 5 AAC: 96.610 (e)

Issue:

Require the Board of Game, the Board of Fisheries, and the Joint Board to allow members of the public to provide oral testimony remotely during regulatory meetings.

During the 2021-2022 regulatory cycle, both the Board of Fisheries and the Board of Game allowed the public to provide oral testimony remotely but did not during the 2022-2023 regulatory cycle. The high costs of travel to attend board meetings in person presents a barrier to members of the public wishing to provide oral testimony on proposals that affect their livelihoods, effectively disenfranchising individuals and communities that cannot afford to attend meetings in person while amplifying the voices of those with enough money to send representatives to lobby the board members. The 2021-2022 cycle demonstrated that the department has the capability to successfully include remote testimony during board meetings, and this proposal seeks to codify that practice into regulation.

Solution:

Amend 5 AAC: 96.610 (e) as follows:

Phase 4. Each board will give legal notice of timely received proposals. In accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act (AS 44.62), each board will hold a public hearing **and solicit oral testimony, both in-person and remotely**, and will act on proposals or develop alternatives on the subject matter legally noticed. The final decision on all proposals remains the responsibility of a board.

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