

To: Edward Lee

Under protest, I hereby waive confidentiality to the documents attached hereto.

Curtis Chamberlain

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Curtis Chamberlain', with a stylized, cursive script.



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR MIKE DUNLEAVY

Department of Law

CIVIL DIVISION

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April 24, 2026

CONFIDENTIAL – AS 39.52.340

VIA EMAIL ONLY: curt.chamberlain@alaska.gov

Curtis Chamberlain
Board Member
Board of Fisheries
Alaska Department of Fish and Game
333 Raspberry Road
Anchorage, AK 99518-1599

Re: *Letter Accepting Complaint*

Dear Mr. Chamberlain:

This letter is to inform you that our office has received a complaint under the Executive Branch Ethics Act alleging that you violated AS 39.52.120 and AS 39.52.220 by participating in deliberations and taking official action in matters in which you allegedly held a substantial and material personal or financial interest. The complaint further alleges that you provided an inaccurate statement during your ethics disclosure at the February 19, 2026 meeting.

Specifically, the complaint alleges that during your February 19, 2026 ethics disclosure, you stated—when asked directly—that you had never advocated, in either a professional or personal capacity, during a legislative session or public forum for closure of the Area M fishery. The complaint alleges that later-submitted materials and subsequent discussion during the Board's February 23 session suggested that this statement may not have been accurate, and that you may previously have engaged in advocacy on matters directly related to Area M or Yukon-bound salmon.

Alaska Statute 39.52.120 prohibits a public officer from taking or withholding official action in order to affect a matter in which the officer has a personal or financial interest. Alaska Statute 39.52.220 requires full and accurate disclosure of any interest that

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may result in a violation of the Act. Alaska Statute 39.52.270 requires that such disclosures be true, correct, and complete.

Any person may file a complaint with the Attorney General alleging a public officer violated the Ethics Act.¹ When the Department of Law receives a complaint, we must determine whether the allegations—if true—would constitute conduct in violation of the Ethics Act.² If the allegations do not meet that standard, the complaint must be dismissed. If the allegations would constitute a violation if true, the Department must accept the complaint for investigation and serve the complaint on the subject officer for a response.³

Based on our initial review, we have determined that the allegations regarding a material misstatement—if true—would constitute a violation of the Ethics Act, and we have therefore accepted the complaint for investigation.⁴

Enclosed is a copy of the complaint received by our office. Under AS 39.52.310(f), you have **20 days** from the service of this letter to provide a full and fair written disclosure of all facts and circumstances pertaining to the alleged violations. In making your mandatory disclosure, any “[m]isrepresentation of a material fact” would be a violation of the Ethics Act.⁵ Please address the following:

1. Please describe all instances in which you provided public testimony, comments, or statements—whether in a legislative setting, public meeting, or other public forum—on matters involving Area M or Yukon-bound salmon that could be construed as advocacy.
2. Please explain the basis for your February 19, 2026 on-record statement that you had never advocated, in a personal or professional capacity, for closure of Area M fisheries.
3. Please reconcile that statement with information and discussion raised at the Board’s February 23 session suggesting that prior statements you made in public forums may be inconsistent with your February 19 answer.

¹ AS 39.52.310(a).

² AS 39.52.310(b), (d).

³ AS 39.52.310(d).

⁴ AS 39.52.310(f).

⁵ AS 39.52.310(f).

Curtis Chamberlain, Board Member, Board of Fisheries

April 24, 2026

Re: Letter Accepting Complaint

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4. Please describe your basis for stating that your testimony concerning SB 128 was as a fact witness and did not constitute advocacy.
5. Please identify any personal or financial interest—direct or indirect—that you or an immediate family member may have in matters relating to Area M, including interests arising from your employment, prior advocacy, or familial permit ownership.
6. Please describe the steps you took to ensure your February 19 ethics disclosure was “true, correct, and complete,” as required by AS 39.52.270.

Failure to respond to this letter within 20 days will be considered an admission of the allegations in the complaint.⁶

The existence of this complaint and this investigation is confidential under AS 39.52.340(a). It is a violation of the Ethics Act to breach this confidentiality. You may waive confidentiality only in writing, consistent with AS 39.52.340(c).

Sincerely,

STEPHEN J. COX
ATTORNEY GENERAL

By: /s/ Matthew P. Stinson
Matthew P. Stinson
Assistant Attorney General

MPS/ajh

Enclosure

cc: Heather Thompson, Complainant

⁶ AS 39.52.310(f).

Via email
February 23, 2026

Alaska Attorney General's Office
Assistant Attorney General Edward Lee
edward.lee@alaska.gov

RE: Complaint of EBEA Violation / AS 39.52.310(b) / Alaska Board of Fisheries

Dear Mr. Lee.

Please accept this written complaint of numerous violations of the Executive Branch Ethics Act (EBEA) by members of the Alaska Board of Fisheries occurring on February 19, 2026 and continuing through the current Board of Fisheries regulatory meeting on Alaska Peninsula/Aleutians/Chignik Finfish matters. I am a member of the Native Village of Unga, which brought these matters to the attention of the Board before the meeting and during the meeting. I request expedited consideration of this complaint to avoid conflicted Board members from taking official actions on regulatory proposals in which they have substantial and material personal interests.

1. Violations of AS 39.52.120(b) and AS 39.52.220 by Curtis Chamberlain

As fully explained by the united Eastern Aleutians tribes, including the Native Village of Unga in their February 13, 2026 letter to the Board of Fisheries and its designated Ethics Supervisors,¹ which is fully incorporated into this Complaint by reference, Board Member Chamberlain has at least a personal interest in Board of Fisheries proposals² to restrict the Area M salmon fishery that is both substantial and material. First, because an organization in which he is involved stands to receive a benefit if the Board adopts those proposals, his employment by Calista Corporation creates at least a personal conflict of interest and may also be a financial conflict of interest. Second, his own personal advocacy against the Area M salmon fishery, even when analyzed independently of his employment by Calista, is a personal interest that creates a conflict of interest. The fact that this advocacy occurred before his term on the Board began does not remove the conflict of interest.

A "personal interest" can be any interest held by a public officer from which, or as a result of which, a person or organization receives a benefit. AS 39.52.960(18). Under the EBEA, the definition of "benefit" does not require that the benefit received be financial or economic. Indeed, anything to a person's, or an organization's, advantage or self-interest is a benefit, regardless of the financial gain. Thus, if Calista Corporation or Mr. Chamberlain himself stand to receive a benefit from Mr. Chamberlain's vote in favor of proposals to restrict Area M salmon fisheries, Mr.

¹ The full letter was made part of the public record of the Board of Fisheries' Feb. 18-24, 2026 meeting, even though that is not required under the EBEA. RC004, available at <https://www.alaska.gov/ethics/regulatory-regions-18-24-2026-pdfs/2026-02-18-24-2026-Board-of-Fisheries-Regulatory-Regions-18-24-2026-PDF.pdf>

² Those proposals include, at least, the following: 108; 127; 128; 129; 131; 132; 133; 136; 147; 148; 151 and 152.

Chamberlain has at least a personal interest in those proposals even if the benefit is not financial in nature.

The EBEA is meant to prevent a Board member from taking or withholding action “in order to affect a matter in which the public officer has a personal or financial interest.” AS 39.52.120(b)(4) (emphasis added). The issue is not whether the action taken would provide any financial benefit to Mr. Chamberlain personally or to his employer (or his employer’s shareholders). The question is whether his votes on the specific proposals listed in footnote 2 “affect a matter in which [Mr. Chamberlain] has a personal or financial interest.” He clearly has (1) at least a personal interest, in (2) the matter of Area M fisheries regulation as it relates to Yukon-bound salmon which is encompassed by the listed proposals, and (3) his participation in deliberations and voting on the proposals listed below affect that matter. Nothing more is required under the EBEA to establish an impermissible conflict of interest. *See* 2005 Inf. Op. Att’y Gen. (Mar. 24; 663-05-0171), 2005 WL 1198705 at *3 (Alaska A.G. 2005) (“Furthermore, in rendering opinions under AS 39.52, we assume generally that if the requisite interest in a matter is found, then participation by the interest holder is for his/her own benefit.”)

Mr. Chamberlain has publicly testified to this Board in support of a regulatory proposal to drastically curtail the Area M salmon fishery, and to the Legislature in support of a Senate Bill to completely close all of Area M to commercial fishing in June. Although Mr. Chamberlain stated in his ethics disclosure that his fisheries advocacy was personal in nature and not at the behest of Calista,³ Calista used the fact of Mr. Chamberlain’s advocacy, and his appointment to the Board of Fisheries, as a part of Calista’s own fisheries advocacy. If his

³ This is a questionable assertion with regards to his testimony at the 2023 Board meeting addressing Alaska Peninsula /Aleutians finfish. He testified to the Board as “Curt Chamberlain-Calista Corporation” on February 22, 2023 (audio at https://www.alaska.gov/state/regulations/regprocess/boards/board_swt_2023/2023_peninsula_hind_chum/medialias/Path_Meeting%2002-22-23%20Feb%22-23%2006%2010%20PM.mp3, timestamp 4:04:27). After describing Calista and its 37,000 shareholders, he testified that “Calista supports Proposal 140.” His testimony also accused the Board of “chronic mismanagement” with regards to Yukon chum, stated that “AYK salmon are being overfished,” and argued that “if any party has the right to harvest those [AYK] chum, it is the residents of the Yukon and Kuskokwim River, who should be using them for subsistence.” He also stated that Proposal 140 “falls far short of the Board’s and the State’s statutory and constitutional mandate,” which in his view contained language that “is unambiguous and unequivocal.” He closed by stating that **“Calista Corporation is fully committed to protecting its shareholders’ and communities’ traditional ways of life, and will do whatever it takes to ensure preservation of the same.”** He also indicated that if he were on the Board of Fisheries, he would take action to ensure that sufficient escapement exists in the Yukon and Kuskokwim to “hit the terminal fishery” on those rivers (in which his father holds a commercial salmon permit, see footnote 6). He stated that Article 8 Section 17 of the Alaska Constitution mandates that the Board take action to “leave enough salmon for Yukon and commercial fisheries to survive. My family has a permit that isn’t worth the paper it’s written on.” The issues raised by Proposal 140, and embraced by Mr. Chamberlain’s testimony, are exactly the same matter currently being debated by the Board at the Feb. 2026 meeting: whether additional restrictions to the Area M salmon fishery should be imposed to increase salmon returns to the Yukon-Kuskokwim region.

substantial and material personal interest in restricting Area M fisheries provides a benefit to Calista, it creates a conflict of interest regardless of whether Calista directed his efforts.

Calista clearly believes that it will receive a benefit from Board action to restrict Area M fisheries, and nothing in the EBEA requires that such a benefit be economic, financial or tied in any way to a monetary gain. Calista has advocated to: place part of Area M under Federal fisheries management so that all net fishing in that portion would be prohibited; called the Board of Fisheries' failure to enact more stringent regulation of Area M "embarrassing" and a violation of State law; and stated that ending all interception of chum salmon by the Area M fishery was one of Calista's most impactful strategic goals.

Because Mr. Chamberlain has, at least, in his personal capacity outside of his service to the Board of Fisheries, publicly advocated to restrict or close Area M salmon fisheries for the purported benefit of Yukon-bound salmon, he has demonstrated a substantial and material personal interest in the matters espoused by many of the regulatory proposals currently before the Board of Fisheries. His employment by Calista as an attorney and his repeated public appearances during which he identified himself as a Calista attorney before advocating to restrict Area M salmon fisheries "transcend[s] his own private concerns" about the Area M salmon fishery, demonstrating a substantial and material personal interest in restricting or closing Area M salmon fisheries. *See* 1993 Op. Att'y Gen (Jan.21; 663-93-0259), 1993 WL 595764, at *4 (Alaska A.G.).⁴ The Board Chair's determination that he had no conflict is not supported by the facts or the law, and itself is a violation of the EBEA (see section 3 below).

⁴ The Chair attempted to discount the applicability of this 1993 Attorney General opinion to Mr. Chamberlain's situation, stating that the 1993 AG Opinion focused primarily on a State Board member's conflict related to that Board member's performance and administration of a discrete contract for the advancement of providing access to subsistence users. This is incorrect. The Board Member's leadership role within a Native Association "[gave] him a substantial personal interest in the benefits to be derived from as well as the obligations to be performed by the Native Association under the Native Association Contract" with the National Park Service to collect data on "customary and traditional subsistence use patterns." 1993 WL 595764, at *1 (emphasis added). But it was not just the contract that created the Board member's personal interest in subsistence matters; it was also the fact that he "actively represents" the constituent members of the Native Association on subsistence matters:

Matters attending the rights of subsistence users in Y are important matters that the board regularly addresses. . . . Where the board deliberates on proposals that actually or potentially advance the rights of subsistence users over other user groups in Y, we believe that A's participation as a board member will put him in a conflict between his interests and responsibilities to the Native Association and its constituents (Native subsistence users in Y) and his public trust responsibilities to discharge impartially his duties as a member of the board on behalf of all user groups. In such instances, it would be extremely problematic for A to remain impartial and unbiased, or to refrain from exercising any undue influence or otherwise misuse his official position on behalf of the Native Association groups whom he actively represents, while serving as a member of the board.

Id. at *4.

The Board Chair's reliance on a 1994 Attorney General opinion in determining that Mr. Chamberlain does not have a conflict of interest is misplaced. That opinion, dated February 17, 1993,⁵ analyzed whether a State Board member's participation on two private corporation boards of directors created a conflict of interest under the EBEA. *See* 1994 Op. Att'y Gen (Feb.17, 1993; 663-93-0257), 1993 WL 667345, at *1 (Alaska A.G.). The State Board member described in that Opinion had not personally advocated for the positions taken by the organizations for which he held director positions. *See id.* at *2. Instead, the potential conflict was created by his organization's position on the State Board's implementation of a State statute. No conflict was found because of the organization's lack of direct financial benefit from such implementation and that any tangible benefit from such implementation would be enjoyed by all users across the State. *Id.* at *3.

This situation is markedly different. Mr. Chamberlain himself has advocated to this Board, as well as the State Legislature, to take certain positions regarding the Area M salmon fishery. He has done so both as a personal matter and potentially on behalf of his employer or to his employer's benefit. His interest is not one "possessed generally by the public or a large class of persons to which the public officer belongs." *See* AS 39.52.110(b).⁶ Unlike the general public, he has actually appeared before this Board and before the State Legislature to expressly advocate for more restrictions on the Area M salmon fishery, and he repeatedly identifies himself as an assistant general counsel for Calista when he does so. This creates the distinct impression that his advocacy is done on behalf of his employer and as representative of his employer's shareholders. This goes far beyond a general interest in State fisheries shared by the general public. Nor is he a member of "a large class of persons" in his role as an attorney for Calista. While Mr. Chamberlain appeared to suggest that his personal interests are the same as any shareholder in any Alaska Native

⁵ This was submitted into the Feb, 2026 meeting record by the Board Chair as RC029. https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/static/regulations/regprocess/fisheriesboard/pdfs/2025-2026/akpen/rcs/RC029_Member_Carlson-Van_Dort_1994_Ethics_Opinion.pdf

⁶ As stated in the Eastern Aleutian tribes' letter, Mr. Chamberlain also has a financial interest created by his employment with Calista that is substantial and material, and is not of the kind generally shared by the public. In addition, Mr. Chamberlain disclosed on February 19, 2026 that his father, an immediate relative under the EBEA, holds a commercial salmon drift net permit on the middle Kuskokwim River that has not been used since 1996. As ably argued by Member Godfrey during the Feb. 19 ethics disclosures, the Board's internal policy on whether and how such permits create conflicts of interest is not clear and the policy, such as it is, is not consistently applied. The potential increase in the economic value of the permit as a result of Board action is sufficient to create a potential conflict of interest that must be thoroughly addressed for the same reasons discussed below in section 2 with regard to Board Member Irwin. *See* 2009 Op. Att'y Gen. (May 21, 2009; No. 661-07-0014), 2009 WL 1664961, at *2 (Alaska A.G.) (EBEA analysis should "focus on whether [Board member]'s official actions in a matter could likely increase or decrease the value of his interests or otherwise materially and substantially affect his interests."). Nor is this a conjectural situation: Mr. Chamberlain's testimony to this Board on February 23, 2023 indicates that his advocacy against Area M salmon fisheries is, at least in part, due to a desire to increase Kuskokwim salmon returns so that his family's commercial fishing permit, which is currently "not worth the paper it's written on," can be used again, and he stated that if he was a member of the Board, he would advocate for exactly that. *See* footnote 3.

corporation, this is disingenuous. It is not his role as a Calista shareholder that creates his interest in the matter of Area M salmon fisheries; it is his advocacy against those exact fisheries in his personal life, which Calista has used to its own benefit.

Furthermore, we disagree with the Board's continued conflation of financial interests and personal interests under the EBEA. The statute itself separates these types of interests. "Personal interest" is defined as "an interest held or involvement by a public officer . . . from which, or as a result of which, a person or organization receives a benefit," and "benefit" means "anything that is to a person's advantage or self-interest, . . . regardless of the financial gain" AS 39.52.960(3) ("benefit"), AS 39.52.960(18) ("personal interest"). If a personal interest is itself substantial and material, it creates a conflict of interest and the analysis ends. Going further to require that the personal interest also involve some substantial and material financial interest, would render the personal-interest definition in the statute meaningless.

The Board Chair apparently based her determination that Mr. Chamberlain's advocacy did not create a conflict of interest on the fact that the advocacy occurred before his service on the Board (as stated on the record on Feb. 23, 2026 at the outset of the meeting day). But the EBEA does not make such a distinction; the sole question is whether the Board member's "actions may affect his current personal and financial interests." 2009 Op. Att'y Gen. (May 21, 2009: No. 661-07-0014), 2009 WL 1664961, at *2 (Alaska A.G.). If the personal or financial interest "survive[s] after the officer's state service begins" and the Board member "will continue to receive . . . benefits" from a personal or financial interest, then a conflict of interest may exist. *See id.* There is no time limitation on a personal interest that creates a conflict of interest under the EBEA. While divestiture prior to Board service may be sufficient to remove a financial conflict of interest, the same logic would not necessarily apply to a personal interest. This is particularly true with personal conflicts that are created by firmly-held ideological positions such as a desire to "do whatever it takes" to preserve one's traditional culture and way of life. *See, e.g.,* footnote 3. Furthermore, Mr. Chamberlain has not divested himself of the two financial interests described herein (his employment by Calista and his father's commercial salmon permit on the Kuskokwim), either of which is sufficient to create a conflict of interest. Thus, the fact that Calista did not author any of the proposals currently before the Board or that Mr. Chamberlain's advocacy predated his Board service is a meaningless distinction not consistent with the plain text of the EBEA.

Compounding this violation, Mr. Chamberlain appears to have made an incorrect statement on the record during his ethics disclosure on February 19, 2026. At the Board of Fisheries proceeding on February 19, 2026, Board Member Carpenter asked Mr. Chamberlain — directly and on the record during conflict of interest discussions — the following question: *"I'm going to ask one final question, and this is specific to either in your personal capacity or in your professional capacity, have you ever advocated in either one of those situations during the legislative session or through a public forum to advocate for closing Area M fisheries in general?"* Mr. Chamberlain answered: *"No, I have not."* The official transcript of a May 1, 2023, Alaska Senate Resources Standing Committee hearing directly contradicts this denial.⁷

⁷ The transcript of the Senate Resource Standing Committee hearing is available at

At the May 1, 2023 hearing, Mr. Chamberlain appeared as Assistant General Counsel for Calista Corporation as listed in the official witness register. The hearing was a formal Alaska Senate Resources Standing Committee meeting during the 2023-24 Legislative session, and is documented as a matter of public record. Mr. Chamberlain stated that he was testifying to address the criticisms of Senate Bill 128. He then argued the Aleutians could absorb a fishery closure, that the statutory subsistence priority warranted legislative action overriding the Board of Fisheries' 2023 actions regarding the Area M salmon fishery management plan, and that "statutory guardrails" should be implemented — all directed at restricting or closing Area M commercial fishing as proposed in Senate Bill 128. The denial is not a matter of interpretation or degree. The transcript is a verbatim official record of a public proceeding in which Mr. Chamberlain did precisely what he denied doing.

This is a violation of AS 39.52.220, which requires Board of Fisheries' members to disclose on the public record, and to the designated Ethics Supervisor and the Attorney General, any matter in which the Board member is involved that may result in a violation of the EBEA. AS 39.52.270 requires that a public officer certify that his ethics disclosure is "to the best of the public officer's knowledge, . . . true, correct, and complete." This includes ethics disclosures made on the public record under AS 39.52.220(a). *See* AS 39.52.270(c). Making a false sworn statement is, of course, perjury. AS 11.56.200.

While public officers may be presumed to "conduct their official duties honestly and impartially," in some situations, "an officer's personal interests in a matter may be so significant that they overcome that presumption." 2007 Op. Att'y Gen. (Sept. 18; No. 661-07-0014), 2007 WL 3281939 (Alaska A.G.), at *5 (emphasis added). Making a demonstrably false statement on the public record during ethics disclosures that masks a personal conflict of interest is more than sufficient to overcome this presumption.

It also calls into question Mr. Chamberlain's statements that he believes he can act impartially on the proposals to restrict Area M salmon fisheries currently before the Board. Regardless, such statements are irrelevant under the EBEA, which provides that a public officer "may not...take or withhold action in order to affect a matter in which the public officer has a personal or financial interest." AS 39.52.120(b)(4) (emphasis added). If a Board member has a personal interest in a matter, the Board member may not take or withhold action to affect that matter. There is no exception for matters where a Board member states a subjective belief that he or she can remain impartial despite a clear conflict of interest. Such an exception would gut the meaning and effect of the EBEA, allowing a public officer with conflicts of interest to participate in all kinds of actions that benefit the officer personally, and asking the public to just trust that the officer will be fair and impartial.

The Board Chair's failure to take appropriate action under the EBEA does not excuse Mr. Chamberlain of his obligation to avoid taking or withholding action on a matter in which he has a substantial and material personal interest. AS 39.52.270(b). His continued participation in the ongoing meeting, during which he has actively questioned testifying individuals about the Area M salmon fishery, is a daily violation of the EBEA.

2. Violation of AS 39.52.120(b) by Olivia Irwin

On February 18, 2026, Ms. Irwin disclosed that her aunt possesses two commercial salmon fishing permits (net and fish wheel) for the Tanana River, but that the permits have not been fished since 1993 and there is no intention to continue fishing those permits. Ms. Irwin, in response to a

question from Board Member Godfrey, disclosed that she had not received any formal opinion from the Attorney General's office as to whether the permits created a potential conflict of interest. Mr. Godfrey opined that such permits could ostensibly increase in value depending on actions taken on the specific proposals before the Board, to which Department of Law attorney Mr. Lee responded that "an aunt is statutorily a conflict" due to the definition of "immediate family member." and that the Department of Law has not weighed in on whether Ms. Irwin's aunt's permits create a conflict of interest. Mr. Godfrey noted that he was previously disqualified from acting on proposals before the Board due to his uncle holding a permit that also had not been fished in years, suggesting an inconsistent approach by the Board in resolving these types of conflicts and the need to have a determination by the Department of Law on such matters. Chair Carlson-Van Dort indicated she, as Chair, makes such determinations for Board members, and that her approach is that when the permit is not held in the regulatory area under consideration, i.e., not in Area M, then it is unnecessary to analyze whether such permit creates a conflict of interest. It is only if there is a permit held in the specific regulatory area under consideration by the Board that the Board must look at whether there is a substantial or material "investment" in that permit. That analysis is incorrect as a matter of law and thus violates the EBEA.

As correctly pointed out by Board Member Wood, the location of a fishing permit outside of the direct regulatory area being considered can be relevant given the substance of the proposals before the Board. The question is not limited to the geographic location of the permit, but whether the permit creates a personal or financial interest in a matter before the Board. *See* 1996 Alaska Op. Att'y Gen. (Inf.) 5 (Nov. 29, 1996: No. 661-95-0214), 1994 WL 1029333 at *2 (Alaska A.G. 1994) ("possible conflicts could arise with respect to allocation matters that may not appear to relate directly to regulation of [Board member's] fishery. Board decisions that affect the allocation of fish to other competing fisheries or user groups will have an impact on the financial interests of fishers and permit holders in the Z River Fishery, which might be sufficiently significant and certain to warrant a finding of a conflict for Mr. X."). Furthermore, the sheer number of public comments and public testimony from individuals and organizations in the Yukon region submitted during this current Board of Fisheries meeting taking positions on the various proposals to restrict Area M salmon fisheries belies any argument that ownership of a fishing permit in the Yukon could not possibly create a conflict of interest with regard to those proposals. Thus, there are significant questions whether the Chair properly applied the law to determine that Ms. Irwin had no conflicts of interest and whether the failure of the Chair to seek guidance from the Department of Law on this issue was appropriate.

We also renew our complaint that Ms. Irwin's recent employment with the Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association (YRDFA) created a personal conflict of interest that is not alleviated by her resignation from YRDFA less than three weeks before the start of this Board meeting. As Ms. Irwin stated on the record during the colloquy about her ethics disclosure, in her position immediately before her resignation as a Community Liaison, she hosted community meetings to hear from the public "on what they were seeing in terms of fishing in the summer and listening to matters coming up before them and providing a space for community members to share observations from their fishing time." Incredibly, on the same day that Ms. Irwin made this disclosure in an effort to assure the Board her YRDFA work did not create a conflict of interest,

YRDFA submitted an RC into the meeting record (RC054)⁸ containing information from community members regarding their observations about their summer fishing time. The fact that information that YRDFA gathered from community members while Ms. Irwin was employed at YRDFA as a community liaison is now being used to advocate for proposals before the Board creates an impermissible conflict of interest for Ms. Irwin.

Without belaboring the point, this is almost the exact situation described in the 1993 Attorney General opinion discussed above, and it does not matter that YRDFA has not authored any of the proposals before the Board or that Ms. Irwin left YRDFA three weeks ago:

No doubt, at some point in the near future, either the Native Association or its constituent members will seek to influence the board on subsistence matters in Y very likely using the same data being collected under the Native Association Contract. Certainly in that situation, A would have an immediate and glaring conflict of interest in serving on the board on matters relating to the Native Association and its constituent members while serving as the Native Association's President. AS 39.52.160(a). We do not believe that we must await the time when the Native Association or its constituent members press their interests before the board before we are able to discern A's potential conflict of interest . . . Even if A were to disassociate himself from the Native Association and the Native Association Contract, there still might be a conflict of interest problem posed in situations where the Native Association or its constituents press subsistence proposals before the board.

1993 WL 595764, at *5 (emphasis added). It is also noteworthy that YRDFA, despite being a regular submitter of public comments to the Board of Fisheries,⁹ did not submit any written public comments to the Board before the public comment deadline of February 3, 2026. Yet YRDFA has at least two of its employees here presenting public testimony (Serena Fitka, YRDFA Executive Director, at timestamp 3:26:11 on February 19, and Grace Kirkey, at timestamp 4:39:50 on February 19). Ms. Alstrom testified that YRDFA supports proposals that would reduce fishing

⁸ Available in the meeting record at

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/data/regulations/regmexs/01/Jarvisand.pdf> 2023-02-03 10:05:00 PC 054 YRDFA Food Security and Wellbeing.pdf

⁹ Some examples include, but are not limited to (1) YRDFA's letter to the Board of Fisheries at its 2023 Alaska Peninsula finfish meeting supporting Proposal 140 to greatly restrict Area M's June salmon fishery (PC 191 re Proposal 140,

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/data/regulations/regmexs/01/Jarvisand.pdf> 2023-02-03 10:05:00

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/data/regulations/regmexs/01/Jarvisand.pdf>, at PDF page 614); and (2)

YRDFA's September 2023 letter to the Board of Fisheries supporting Agenda Change Request 2 which sought to repeal the Board of Fisheries changes to the Area M June salmon management plan adopted in February 2023 (PC 41,

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/data/regulations/regmexs/01/Jarvisand.pdf> 2023-02-03 10:05:00

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/data/regulations/regmexs/01/Jarvisand.pdf>, at PDF page 110-111). Anti-Area M comments from YRDFA submitted to the

Board of Fisheries go all the way back to 2013.
<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/data/regulations/regmexs/01/Jarvisand.pdf> 2023-02-03 10:05:00

time and increase opportunities for additional chum salmon to pass through Area M without being harvested, specifically proposal 131 and 136, and proposals to reduce seine net sizes in Area M. Ms. Kirkey testified that she speaks on behalf of YRDFA and that Area M commercial fisheries "intercept" chum "bound for western rivers." She also described in detail the data contained in RC054, which again was ostensibly collected by YRDFA while Ms. Irwin was employed by YRDFA. Again, the entire course of dealing suggests potential impropriety that should be fully investigated.

The Board Chair's failure to take appropriate action under the EBEA does not excuse Ms. Irwin of her obligation to avoid taking or withholding action on a matter in which she has a substantial and material personal interest. AS 39.52.270(b). Her continued participation in the ongoing meeting, during which she has actively questioned testifying individuals about the Area M salmon fishery, is a daily violation of the EBEA.

3. Violation of AS 39.52.190 by Marit Carlson-Van Dort as Ethics Supervisor

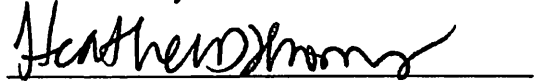
Chair Carlson-Van Dort, as the ethics supervisor for Board Members Chamberlain and Irwin, violated the EBEA by determining that Mr. Chamberlain and Ms. Irwin could fully participate in the Feb. 18-24, 2026 Board of Fisheries meeting. It violates the EBEA for a public officer to "knowingly aid another public officer" in violating the EBEA. AS 39.52.190. The Chair's determinations that neither Mr. Chamberlain nor Ms. Irwin had conflicts of interest regarding matters before the Board at this meeting is contrary to the facts in the record and misapplies the EBEA.

Request for Immediate Action

I respectfully request expedited consideration of this complaint to ensure that no Board action is taken in violation of the EBEA. To that end, as a conservative measure, Mr. Chamberlain and Ms. Irwin should recuse themselves from deliberating and voting on proposals 108, 127, 128, 129, 131, 132, 133, 136, 147, 148, 151 and 152, or any other proposals seeking to restrict the Area M fishery with regards to AYK salmon, to avoid further violation of the EBEA and resulting voiding of Board action taken in violation of the EBEA (AS 39.52.430(c)).

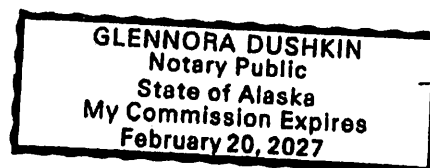
VERIFICATION

I, Heather Thompson, hereby verify that the facts stated in this Complaint are true and correct to the best of my information and belief.



Heather Thompson

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN TO before me this 23 day of February, 2026.




Notary Public for the State of Alaska

 Delete  Archive  Report  Move to     Share to Teams  

Re: [SECURE] Confidential Letter Accepting Complaint attached

CS

Chamberlain, Curtis S (DFG)

To: Hobbs, Angela J (LAW)

Cc: Stinson, Matthew P (LAW)

Tue 5/12/2026 3:27 PM

 **Confidential - State of Alaska**

BOF Ethics Response.docx

70 KB



Good afternoon, Angie.

Below are my respective responses. I'm assuming the questions you asked in your letter are the issues you're investigating. If there are other assumptions or questions you have, please let me know.

Thank you,

Curt

From: Hobbs, Angela J (LAW) <angela.hobbs@alaska.gov>
Sent: Friday, April 24, 2026 11:27 AM
To: Chamberlain, Curtis S (DFG) <curt.chamberlain@alaska.gov>
Cc: Stinson, Matthew P (LAW) <matthew.stinson@alaska.gov>
Subject: [SECURE] Confidential Letter Accepting Complaint attached

Hi Mr. Chamberlain,

Please see attached confidential letter from AAG Matthew Stinson regarding a complaint received under the Executive Branch Ethics Act. Please let me know if you have difficulties opening the pdf.

Thank you,
Angie

Angie Hobbs

Law Office Assistant III

Labor and State Affairs Section

Alaska Department of Law

1031 W. 4th Avenue, Suite 200

Anchorage, Alaska 99501

(907) 269-6612

1. Please describe all instances in which you provided public testimony, comments, or statements—whether in a legislative setting, public meeting, or other public forum—on matters involving Area M or Yukon-bound salmon that could be construed as advocacy.

I must object to the question as asked. This request for information is so broad, compound, and vague, as to be effectively meaningless. With respect to fisheries, I've provided testimony regarding Yukon bound salmon to the US House of Representatives, Alaska House and Senate (including committees and subcommittees), Alaska Board of Fisheries, US fish & Wildlife Service, Alaska Federation of Natives, Alaska Native Village Corporation Association, North Pacific Fisheries Management Council, Arctic Circle forum in Tokyo, Japan and Berlin, Germany, Reservation Economic Summit, National Congress of American Indians, Arctic Encounter, and countless other forums. To the best of my recollection, my testimony specifically regarding Area M is limited to the 2023 Board of Fisheries Aleutian peninsula meeting and possibly the following work session where Agenda Change Requests pertaining to the Area M Fishery were brought forth, and my testimony surrounding SB 128 described in the Complaint. I've indirectly referenced Alaska's policy favoring coastal intercept fisheries over terminal fisheries at the Alaska Federation of Natives conference in 2024.

2. Please explain the basis for your February 19, 2026 on-record statement that you had never advocated, in a personal or professional capacity, for closure of Area M fisheries.

This question asks me to explain a negative. My statement speaks for itself. I have never, in a personal or professional capacity, advocated for the closure of Area M fisheries. The complainants are likely referring to my testimony on SB 128. I was originally asked to testify as an expert witness in that hearing as to the legal aspects of the bill, but declined. I responded that I would be willing to testify as a fact witness comparing the effects of the fisheries closure on the Calista region, and to the Aleutian Peninsula's diversity and reliance on salmon as it pertains to the Sustainable Salmon Policy. The proponent of SB128 acknowledged that the bill had no chance of passing. However, I accepted the opportunity to testify as a means to educate legislators to the effects of the salmon crash

on the people in the Yukon and Kuskokwim Rivers. I did not advocate in support of SB 128 in any way shape or form.

Even if I had advocated for SB128, that would not have qualified for advocacy for closure of the Area M fisheries. SB128 had a temporal limitation to the month of June, meaning it was a time and area limitation, and not a complete closure. The Area M fishery goes well into the fall, and the majority of salmon are harvested outside the month of June.

My testimony to the board of fisheries has largely been modeled to limited time and area, as well as to conduct additional studies to identify areas where low AYK salmon were located so fishing efforts could be increased in those areas to compensate for the cuts to time and area.

3. Please reconcile that statement with information and discussion raised at the Board's February 23 session suggesting that prior statements you made in public forums may be inconsistent with your February 19 answer.

Prior to the February 23 discussion, I reviewed all prior statements raised in the Objection letters to ensure my statements were correct and accurate. After reviewing all prior statements, I reaffirmed that my statements from February 19 were correct.

4. Please describe your basis for stating that your testimony concerning SB 128 was as a fact witness and did not constitute advocacy.

I object to the question as asked. I never asserted that my testimony concerning SB 128 was not advocacy. The purpose of my testimony regarding SB 128 was to inform the legislature of the socioeconomic needs of the people of the Yukon and Kuskokwim rivers and how the salmon crash affected the people and cultures thereof. It was advocacy in that I hoped it would stimulate the legislature to look for other means to address the salmon crash and avoid an economic and food security crisis for the people of the Yukon and Kuskokwim Rivers. I did not advocate for passage of SB 128 or for the closure of the Area M Fishery.

My statement that I testified as a fact witness was informed by my background as a trial attorney, which recognizes fact witnesses and expert witnesses. This was further informed that I was originally asked to testify as an expert witness as to the legal aspects of SB 128. I declined to testify, as I felt I didn't feel I was sufficiently qualified or comfortable to testify in this area of law but stated I could testify as a fact witness on SB 128 as previously described.

5. Please identify any personal or financial interest—direct or indirect—that you or an immediate family member may have in matters relating to Area M, including interests arising from your employment, prior advocacy, or familial permit ownership.

All of my personal and financial interests were discussed in my financial disclosures and subsequent discussions. I have nothing further to add that would be of note.

6. Please describe the steps you took to ensure your February 19 ethics disclosure was “true, correct, and complete,” as required by AS 39.52.270.

I reviewed all prior statements I had as it pertained to the issues raised in the objection letter and verified that all statements were true, correct and complete to the best of my knowledge. My prior statements were all well documented and in no place did I advocate for the closure of Area M. If I had, the counsel preparing the objection letter would have highlighted it. The objectors went through great lengths to scour all prior records for statements.

In fact, I over disclosed and addressed prior statements regarding Area M out of an abundance of caution. I don't believe there is a personal conflict with respect to my prior testimony on Area M. Other board members have advocated prior to their service on the board. Members served on hatchery boards while voting on hatchery proposals. Other boards have similar overlap. These issues have been well settled. However, for the purpose of transparency, I disclosed as much as possible out of an abundance of caution.



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR MIKE DUNLEAVY

Department of Law

CIVIL DIVISION

1031 West 4th Avenue, Suite 200
Anchorage, AK 99501
Main: 907.269.5100
Fax: 907.276.3697

May 20, 2026

CONFIDENTIAL – AS 39.52.340

VIA EMAIL ONLY: curt.chamberlain@alaska.gov

Curtis Chamberlain
Board Member
Board of Fisheries
Alaska Department of Fish and Game
333 Raspberry Road
Anchorage, AK 99518-1599

Re: *Notice of Resolution of Ethics Act Complaint via Corrective Action*

Dear Mr. Chamberlain:

This letter provides official notice regarding the disposition of the Executive Branch Ethics Act complaint submitted by Heather Thompson on February 23, 2026, concerning your conduct as a member of the Board of Fisheries.

Pursuant to AS 39.52.330, the Attorney General has determined that your conduct does not warrant the initiation of formal proceedings before the Personnel Board under AS 39.52.360. Instead, the Attorney General has issued an order corrective action. That corrective action is now being implemented, and thus formally resolving the complaint.

Because this matter has been resolved without initiation of formal proceedings,¹ it remains confidential under AS 39.52.340.

As required by statute, notice of this corrective action is being provided to both you as the subject of the complaint and to Ms. Thompson as the complainant. Under AS 39.52.335(d), Ms. Thompson may submit comments to the Personnel Board regarding the disposition of the complaint within 15 days after receipt of this summary.

¹ AS 39.52.330.

Curtis Chamberlain, Board Member, Board of Fisheries
Re: Notice of Resolution of Ethics Act Complaint via Corrective Action

May 20, 2026
Page 2 of 2

CONFIDENTIAL – AS 39.52.340

Please contact the Department of Law if you have any questions regarding this notice.

Sincerely,

CORI MILLS
ACTING ATTORNEY GENERAL

By: /s/ Matthew P. Stinson
Matthew P. Stinson
Assistant Attorney General

MPS/ajh

Enclosure

cc: Heather Thompson, Complainant



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR MIKE DUNLEAVY

Department of Law

CIVIL DIVISION

1031 West 4th Avenue, Suite 200
Anchorage, AK 99501
Main: 907.269.5100
Fax: 907.276.3697

May 19, 2026

Cheri Lowenstein
Administrative Director
Designated Ethics Supervisor for the Chair of the Board of Fisheries
Office of Governor Mike Dunleavy
PO Box 110001
Juneau, AK 99811-0001

ORDER OF CORRECTIVE ACTION

On April 24, 2026, the attorney general designee accepted an Ethics Act complaint against Board of Fisheries member, Curtis Chamberlain, for investigation.¹ The complaint alleged that during Mr. Chamberlain's February 19, 2026, ethics disclosure, Mr. Chamberlain stated—when asked directly—that he had never advocated, in either a professional or personal capacity, during a legislative session or public forum for closure of the Area M fishery. The complaint further alleged that later-submitted materials and subsequent discussion during the Board's February 23 session suggested that this statement may not have been accurate, and that Mr. Chamberlain may have previously engaged in advocacy on matters directly related to Area M or Yukon-bound salmon.

Alaska Statute 39.52.120(b)(4) prohibits a public officer from taking or withholding official action to affect a matter in which the officer has a personal or financial interest. A "personal interest" includes any involvement by a public officer from which a person or organization receives a benefit, and "benefit" means anything to a person's advantage or self-interest regardless of financial gain.² A "financial interest" includes holding a position as an officer or employee of a business that is a source of income.³ Alaska Statute 39.52.220 requires a board member to disclose on the public record any matter that may result in a violation of the Act, and AS 39.52.270 requires that such disclosures be true, correct, and complete. Under 9 AAC 52.120(b), a board member who participates pursuant to a designated supervisor's determination is relieved of liability only if the member "fully discloses all facts reasonably necessary to the

¹ See AS 39.52.310(f).

² AS 39.52.960(3), (18).

³ AS 39.52.960(9).

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determination.” A false or incomplete disclosure therefore provides no protection—the supervisor’s determination is only as valid as the facts on which it was based.

Concluding that the complaint, if true, would constitute a violation of the Ethics Act, the attorney general designee accepted the complaint for investigation. Having now investigated the matter, the acting attorney general issues this order for corrective action.

Under AS 39.52.330, when the attorney general determines that the conduct of a public officer “does not warrant a hearing under AS 39.52.360,”⁴ but that action is needed “to correct or prevent a violation” of the Executive Branch Ethics Act, the attorney general shall recommend action to remedy the violation. The public officer “shall comply” with the attorney general’s recommended corrective action.⁵ Alaska Statute 39.52.430(c) provides that “[a]ny state action taken in violation of this chapter is voidable” and that the attorney general may take into consideration “the interests of third parties and the nature of the violation.”

FINDINGS

During the February 2026 Alaska Peninsula finfish meeting, the Board of Fisheries voted on multiple regulatory proposals relating to management of the Area M salmon fishery. Five proposals—126, 127, 141, 147, and 148—each passed. Three proposals—126, 127, and 147—passed by a 4-3 vote with Board member Chamberlain casting the deciding vote.

During the conflict-of-interest disclosures on February 19, Mr. Chamberlain stated that he had never advocated—either in his personal or professional capacity—for closing Area M fisheries. [Tr. 61] The Board chair, as Mr. Chamberlain’s designated ethics supervisor, concluded that Mr. Chamberlain did not have a conflict based on the information disclosed. No Board member objected.⁶ [Tr. 67]

⁴ Alaska Statute 39.52.350(a) provides that “[i]f the attorney general determines that there is probable cause to believe that a knowing violation of [the Ethics Act] or a violation *that cannot be corrected* under AS 39.52.330 has occurred, or that the subject of a complaint failed to comply with a recommendation for corrective or preventive action, the attorney general shall initiate formal proceedings by serving a copy of an accusation upon the subject of the accusation. (Emphasis added).

⁵ AS 39.52.330.

⁶ See AS 39.52.220(a) (“If a member of the board or commission objects to the ruling of the supervisor, or if the supervisor discloses an involvement requiring a determination, the members present at a meeting, excluding the involved member, shall vote on the matter.”).

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After Mr. Chamberlain's disclosure, but prior to his vote on these proposals, the Board received another letter discussing Mr. Chamberlain's prior advocacy.⁷ One Board member raised this information for discussion during the February 23 meeting, saying that he was not aware of the instances referenced in the letter and that this information raised concerns that Mr. Chamberlain's disclosure included "inaccurate statements." [Tr. 3] Mr. Chamberlain reiterated his position—that is, he has never advocated for the closure of the Area M fishery. [Tr. 3]

After accepting the Ethics Act complaint, the Department of Law asked Mr. Chamberlain for clarification.⁸ In response to this request, Mr. Chamberlain again reiterated this position, saying he agreed to appear as a "fact witness" to "compar[e] the effects of the fisheries closure on the Calista region, and to the Aleutian Peninsula's diversity and reliance on salmon as it pertains to Sustainable Salmon Policy." He also indicated that the proponent of the legislation "acknowledged that the bill had no chance of passing."

Although the Board chair allowed for discussion on this additional information during the February 23 meeting, she did not provide the Board members with an opportunity to object to her determination and call for a vote. [See Tr. 5–6]

Mr. Chamberlain's explanation of his disclosure is not convincing for two reasons. First, the Ethics Act's disclosure obligation does not turn on whether prior testimony is characterized as factual or advocacy in nature. The obligation under AS 39.52.220 is triggered whenever a board member is involved in a matter that *may* result in a violation—including prior appearances before the legislature on a bill directly addressing the Area M fishery, in his capacity as Calista's counsel. Mr. Chamberlain's appearance at the 2023 Senate Resources Standing Committee hearing on SB 128—a bill whose introduced language would have closed all of Area M to commercial salmon fishing from June 10 through June 30—was itself an involvement in a matter directly related to the proposals before the Board in February 2026. That involvement required disclosure under AS 39.52.220 regardless of how his testimony is characterized. Mr. Chamberlain's disclosure did not meet the standard the Ethics Act demands of a public officer—a disclosure that is true, correct, and complete.⁹

⁷ See RC 139, Conflicts of Interests—Board of Fisheries Members Curtis Chamberlain.

⁸ See AS 39.52.310(f) ("The attorney general may require the subject to provide, within 20 days after service, full and fair disclosure in writing of all facts and circumstances pertaining to the alleged violation.").

⁹ AS 39.52.270.

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Prior to his May 2023 legislative testimony, Mr. Chamberlain had already appeared before the Board of Fisheries itself. On February 22, 2023, he testified before the Board in his identified professional capacity as Calista Corporation's Assistant General Counsel. In that testimony, he stated that "Calista supports Proposal 140"—the major proposal at that cycle to restrict the Area M June salmon fishery—and accused the Board of "chronic mismanagement" of Yukon chum. He further stated that the Yukon-Kuskokwim salmon are being "overfished" and that the Board's and State's constitutional mandate contained language that "is unambiguous and unequivocal" in requiring action to protect those runs. He indicated that if he were on the Board of Fisheries, he would take action to ensure sufficient escapement existed in the Yukon and Kuskokwim rivers. This testimony was direct advocacy before the Board of Fisheries, in a professional capacity, in a public forum, on the exact substantive question addressed by the proposals on which he voted in February 2026. It satisfies every element of AS 39.52.220's disclosure obligation and every element of the Board member's question on February 19, 2026 about prior advocacy.

Second, Mr. Chamberlain's own description of his SB 128 testimony does not support a "fact witness" characterization. He states that he appeared to "compar[e] the effects of the fisheries closure on the Calista region, and to the Aleutian Peninsula's diversity and reliance on salmon as it pertains to Sustainable Salmon Policy." Comparing the effects of a closure on two regions—and implying that one could better absorb it than the other—is an argument in favor of the closure's policy merits directed at the legislative committee with authority to advance the bill. That is advocacy. His further suggestion that the bill's proponent "acknowledged that the bill had no chance of passing" is irrelevant; the Ethics Act disclosure obligation is triggered by his involvement, not by the ultimate fate of the legislation.

Mr. Chamberlain's own on-the-record description of his SB 128 testimony at the February 23, 2026 meeting confirms this analysis. He stated that he "spoke to the ability of the Aleutian Peninsula to withstand anything on that area." [Tr. 3] This is not impact testimony—it is rebuttal of the principal economic objection to closure. The actual language of his testimony states that "The Aleutian peninsula is far better suited to endure this storm than the Yukon and Kuskokwim Rivers were." That is an argument that the objecting community can absorb the policy consequence it opposes. It is advocacy dressed as fact.

Moreover, during his disclosure Mr. Chamberlain indicated that since his nomination to the Board, Calista had taken steps to "wall" him off from the "regulatory positions of Calista," suggesting that he no longer worked on issues related to restricting the amount of fishing that occurs within Area M. [Tr. 46] However, later in his disclosure, Mr. Chamberlain acknowledged that "Calista has advocated for subsistence

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rights under state law, and an amendment to the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act to restore Aboriginal hunting and fishing rights for Alaska Natives” and that he still has a role in that process. [Tr. 34] He further acknowledged that, as Calista’s Assistant General Counsel, he does “speak to subsistence priority and to the repeal—to federal issues” and that these issues “may affect state waters fisheries.” [Tr. 51–52] In addition, Calista has published on its corporate website, under Mr. Chamberlain’s name and professional title as Assistant General Counsel, an article titled “Fighting for Our Subsistence Rights,” which is a transcript of remarks Mr. Chamberlain delivered at the Alaska Federation of Natives on October 20, 2023, in which he states:

Fishing policies have long favored coastal commercial fisheries. Bycatch and overfishing in intercept fisheries capture salmon bound for the Yukon and rivers. Billions of hatchery salmon flood the Gulf of Alaska with fish that compete against and further decimate wild stocks for our region. As a result, Alaska has seen the largest decline of salmon in the Yukon and Kuskokwim rivers since statehood, with no effective measures in effect to protect the rural subsistence priority.¹⁰

The fact that Calista published these remarks on its corporate news page under Mr. Chamberlain’s professional title is significant in two respects. First, it directly contradicts his representation that his advocacy on intercept fisheries management was personal in nature and separate from his role at Calista. Calista’s decision to feature these remarks confirms that the corporation regarded them as part of its own public position.

The disclosure obligation under AS 39.52.220 is not limited to conduct occurring during Board service. It requires disclosure of any matter that *may result* in a violation of the Act—including prior professional relationships and advocacy that create current personal or financial interests. Whether or not that prior representation ultimately constitutes a disqualifying conflict is a determination the designated supervisor is empowered to make—but only when presented with the complete factual record that AS 39.52.270 and 9 AAC 52.120(b) require; Mr. Chamberlain’s disclosure did not provide that record.

The Department of Law also has questions about the full scope of Mr. Chamberlain’s role in “subsistence priority” issues on behalf of Calista and whether there is greater overlap between that role and the matters before the Board than was apparent from his February 2026 disclosure. The statements referenced above raise questions about the extent to which Mr. Chamberlain’s ongoing work at Calista touches on intercept fisheries management—the precise issue addressed by the proposals on which

¹⁰ Available at: [Fighting For Our Subsistence Rights - Calista Corporation](#)

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he voted. Mr. Chamberlain acknowledged during his disclosure that he continues to advise Calista on subsistence priority issues, including issues that impact state waters. Whether that ongoing work, considered together with the Calista publication above, rises to a personal or financial interest requiring recusal is a question the Department cannot fully resolve on the present record. What the Department can conclude is that Mr. Chamberlain had an obligation under AS 39.52.220 and AS 39.52.270 to fully disclose the nature and scope of that work so that his designated supervisor could make an informed determination. That disclosure was not made. The Department will seek additional information from Mr. Chamberlain on this issue and will address it in the advisory opinion described below.

CONCLUSION AND CORRECTIVE ORDER

Based on the foregoing findings, the acting attorney general concludes that Mr. Chamberlain failed to provide a complete disclosure as required by AS 39.52.220 and AS 39.52.270. His affirmative denial of any public forum advocacy for restricting or closing Area M fisheries is not supported by the record. Because the disclosure was incomplete, the Board chair's determination that Mr. Chamberlain had no disqualifying conflict does not satisfy the conditions for protection under 9 AAC 52.120(b).

The acting attorney general further concludes that this violation can be corrected without a formal hearing under AS 39.52.360. The violation is capable of remedy: the Board may re-vote on the affected proposals following lawful procedure. Whether Mr. Chamberlain may participate in that re-vote will be governed by the advisory opinion described below, which will address the full scope of his disclosure obligations and any disqualifying interests on a complete record.

Voiding the proposals rather than leaving them in place is the appropriate corrective measure because retaining regulatory action adopted through a conflicted vote would perpetuate the violation. In reaching this determination, the acting attorney general has considered the interests of third parties and concludes that those interests are adequately protected by a directed re-vote. All impacted parties benefit from a process that complies with the Ethics Act.

Pursuant to AS 39.52.430(c) and AS 39.52.330, the following proposals are hereby void: 126, 127, 141, 147, and 148. Although Mr. Chamberlain's vote was not the deciding factor in Proposals 141 and 148, those proposals are also void. Under AS 39.52.220, a board member who has a disqualifying conflict is prohibited from "voting, deliberating, or participating in the matter"—not merely from casting a deciding vote. Because Mr. Chamberlain participated in deliberations on all five proposals at a

Order of Corrective Action
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May 19, 2026
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time when his disclosure had not met the standard required by AS 39.52.270 and 9 AAC 52.120(b), his participation tainted the deliberative process on each of them regardless of the final vote margin.¹¹ The Board of Fisheries may re-adopt, modify, or reject any of these proposals following lawful procedure.

This order addresses Mr. Chamberlain's participation in the February 2026 meeting. It does not resolve, and is not intended to resolve, the broader question of whether and under what conditions Mr. Chamberlain may participate in future Board proceedings on matters related to Area M or Yukon-Kuskokwim salmon management. The Department will seek additional information from Mr. Chamberlain and will provide him and the Board's Chair with a separate advisory opinion addressing those prospective questions under AS 39.52.240.

Because this action could be corrected under AS 39.52.330, a hearing under AS 39.52.360 is not warranted and these proceedings remain confidential under AS 39.52.340. This order will be provided to the regulations attorney, who will disapprove the regulation changes. *See* AS 44.62.060(b).

CORI MILLS
ACTING ATTORNEY GENERAL

By: /s/ Matthew P. Stinson
Matthew P. Stinson
Ethics Attorney

CC: Rebecca Polizzotto, Regulations Attorney
Marit Carlson-Van Dort, Chair, Board of Fisheries
Curtis Chamberlain, Board of Fisheries
Heather Thompson, Complainant

¹¹ Mr. Chamberlain's participation in deliberations on all five proposals—not merely his votes—tainted the process on each of them. Alaska Statute 39.52.220 prohibits a member from “participating in the matter” when a disqualifying conflict exists, and the obligation to disclose under 9 AAC 52.120(b) conditions any protection on full disclosure before participation begins. Because that condition was not met, his participation in deliberations was unauthorized from the outset. The subsequent enactment of H.B. 33, which now expressly allows conflicted board members to participate without voting, does not affect this analysis. The deliberative process on Proposals 141 and 148 was tainted by the participation of a member whose disclosure had not met the statutory standard—regardless of the final vote margin.



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR MIKE DUNLEAVY

Department of Law
CIVIL DIVISION

P.O. Box 110300
Juneau, Alaska 99811
Main: 907.465.3600
Fax: 907.465.2520

May 20, 2026

The Honorable Nancy Dahlstrom
Lieutenant Governor
State of Alaska
P.O. Box 110015
Juneau, AK 99811-0015

Re: Disapproval of Regulations for Filing
5 AAC 01.360 – 5 AAC 65.022: Board of Fisheries – Commercial and
Sport Fisheries
Our file: 2026200128

Dear Lieutenant Governor Dahlstrom:

The Department of Law has reviewed the regulations adopted by the Board of Fisheries at its February 18 – 24, 2026 meeting and submitted for legal review on March 21, 2026, concerning regulation of subsistence, commercial, and sport fisheries in the Alaska Peninsula, Aleutian Island, and Chignik Finfish areas.

The regulation changes related to Proposals 126, 127, 141, 147, and 148 are disapproved under AS 44.62.060(b)(1) in conformance with the Order of Corrective Action issued by the Acting Attorney General on May 19, 2026.¹ The disapproved regulation changes may not be filed or take effect except pursuant to a subsequent lawful adoption by the Board of Fisheries.

To accommodate an efficient review of the remaining regulation changes adopted by the Board during its February meeting, the Board's administrative staff is instructed to resubmit the remaining regulation changes to the Department of Law for legal review with all changes related to the disapproved proposals removed.

¹ The Acting Attorney General voided Proposals 126, 127, 141, 147, and 148 under AS 39.52.430(c) and AS 39.52.330.

The Honorable Nancy Dahlstrom
File No. 2026200128

May 20, 2026
Page 2 of 2

Sincerely,

CORI MILLS
ACTING ATTORNEY GENERAL

By:

Rebecca C. Polizzotto
Chief Assistant Attorney General
Legislation, Regulations, and
Legislative Research Section

RCP/AHR/hh

CC: Shellene Hutter
Eddie Lee
Commnr Vincent Lang

Via email
February 23, 2026

Alaska Attorney General's Office
Assistant Attorney General Edward Lee
edward.lee@alaska.gov

RE: Complaint of EBEA Violation / AS 39.52.310(b) / Alaska Board of Fisheries

Dear Mr. Lee,

Please accept this written complaint of numerous violations of the Executive Branch Ethics Act (EBEA) by members of the Alaska Board of Fisheries occurring on February 19, 2026 and continuing through the current Board of Fisheries regulatory meeting on Alaska Peninsula/Aleutians/Chignik Finfish matters. I am a member of the Native Village of Unga, which brought these matters to the attention of the Board before the meeting and during the meeting. I request expedited consideration of this complaint to avoid conflicted Board members from taking official actions on regulatory proposals in which they have substantial and material personal interests.

1. Violations of AS 39.52.120(b) and AS 39.52.220 by Curtis Chamberlain

As fully explained by the united Eastern Aleutians tribes, including the Native Village of Unga in their February 13, 2026 letter to the Board of Fisheries and its designated Ethics Supervisors,¹ which is fully incorporated into this Complaint by reference, Board Member Chamberlain has at least a personal interest in Board of Fisheries proposals² to restrict the Area M salmon fishery that is both substantial and material. First, because an organization in which he is involved stands to receive a benefit if the Board adopts those proposals, his employment by Calista Corporation creates at least a personal conflict of interest and may also be a financial conflict of interest. Second, his own personal advocacy against the Area M salmon fishery, even when analyzed independently of his employment by Calista, is a personal interest that creates a conflict of interest. The fact that this advocacy occurred before his term on the Board began does not remove the conflict of interest.

A “personal interest” can be any interest held by a public officer from which, or as a result of which, a person or organization receives a benefit. AS 39.52.960(18). Under the EBEA, the definition of “benefit” does not require that the benefit received be financial or economic. Indeed, anything to a person’s, or an organization’s, advantage or self-interest is a benefit, regardless of the financial gain. Thus, if Calista Corporation or Mr. Chamberlain himself stand to receive a benefit from Mr. Chamberlain’s vote in favor of proposals to restrict Area M salmon fisheries, Mr.

¹ The full letter was made part of the public record of the Board of Fisheries' Feb. 18-24, 2026 meeting, even though that is not required under the EBEA. RC004, available at

[https://www.fda.gov/oc/ohrt/ohrt-regulations-regions-1-january-2019.pdf](#)
[https://www.fda.gov/oc/ohrt/ohrt-regulations-regions-1-january-2019.pdf](#)

² Those proposals include, at least, the following: 108; 127; 128; 129; 131; 132; 133; 136; 147; 148; 151 and 152.

Chamberlain has at least a personal interest in those proposals even if the benefit is not financial in nature.

The EBEA is meant to prevent a Board member from taking or withholding action “in order to affect a matter in which the public officer has a personal or financial interest.” AS 39.52.120(b)(4) (emphasis added). The issue is not whether the action taken would provide any financial benefit to Mr. Chamberlain personally or to his employer (or his employer’s shareholders). The question is whether his votes on the specific proposals listed in footnote 2 “affect a matter in which [Mr. Chamberlain] has a personal or financial interest.” He clearly has (1) at least a personal interest, in (2) the matter of Area M fisheries regulation as it relates to Yukon-bound salmon which is encompassed by the listed proposals, and (3) his participation in deliberations and voting on the proposals listed below affect that matter. Nothing more is required under the EBEA to establish an impermissible conflict of interest. *See* 2005 Inf. Op. Att’y Gen. (Mar. 24; 663-05-0171), 2005 WL 1198705 at *3 (Alaska A.G. 2005) (“Furthermore, in rendering opinions under AS 39.52, we assume generally that if the requisite interest in a matter is found, then participation by the interest holder is for his/her own benefit.”)

Mr. Chamberlain has publicly testified to this Board in support of a regulatory proposal to drastically curtail the Area M salmon fishery, and to the Legislature in support of a Senate Bill to completely close all of Area M to commercial fishing in June. Although Mr. Chamberlain stated in his ethics disclosure that his fisheries advocacy was personal in nature and not at the behest of Calista,³ Calista used the fact of Mr. Chamberlain's advocacy, and his appointment to the Board of Fisheries, as a part of Calista's own fisheries advocacy. If his

³ This is a questionable assertion with regards to his testimony at the 2023 Board meeting addressing Alaska Peninsula /Aleutians finfish. He testified to the Board as “Curt Chamberlain-Calista Corporation” on February 22, 2023 (audio at <https://www.alaska.gov/seminars/audio-reports-state-board-2023>, <https://www.southernalaskafish.com/media/684564/McCormick%20-%20Feb-22-23-09-35.mp3>), timestamp 4:04:27). After describing Calista and its 37,000 shareholders, he testified that “Calista supports Proposal 140.” His testimony also accused the Board of “chronic mismanagement” with regards to Yukon chum, stated that “AYK salmon are being overfished,” and argued that “if any party has the right to harvest those [AYK] chum, it is the residents of the Yukon and Kuskokwim River, who should be using them for subsistence.” He also stated that Proposal 140 “falls far short of the Board’s and the State’s statutory and constitutional mandate,” which in his view contained language that “is unambiguous and unequivocal.” He closed by stating that **“Calista Corporation is fully committed to protecting its shareholders’ and communities’ traditional ways of life, and will do whatever it takes to ensure preservation of the same.”** He also indicated that if he were on the Board of Fisheries, he would take action to ensure that sufficient escapement exists in the Yukon and Kuskokwim to “hit the terminal fishery” on those rivers (in which his father holds a commercial salmon permit, see footnote 6). He stated that Article 8 Section 17 of the Alaska Constitution mandates that the Board take action to “leave enough salmon for Yukon and commercial fisheries to survive. My family has a permit that isn’t worth the paper it’s written on.” The issues raised by Proposal 140, and embraced by Mr. Chamberlain’s testimony, are exactly the same matter currently being debated by the Board at the Feb. 2026 meeting: whether additional restrictions to the Area M salmon fishery should be imposed to increase salmon returns to the Yukon-Kuskokwim region.

substantial and material personal interest in restricting Area M fisheries provides a benefit to Calista, it creates a conflict of interest regardless of whether Calista directed his efforts.

Calista clearly believes that it will receive a benefit from Board action to restrict Area M fisheries, and nothing in the EBEA requires that such a benefit be economic, financial or tied in any way to a monetary gain. Calista has advocated to: place part of Area M under Federal fisheries management so that all net fishing in that portion would be prohibited; called the Board of Fisheries' failure to enact more stringent regulation of Area M "embarrassing" and a violation of State law; and stated that ending all interception of chum salmon by the Area M fishery was one of Calista's most impactful strategic goals.

Because Mr. Chamberlain has, at least, in his personal capacity outside of his service to the Board of Fisheries, publicly advocated to restrict or close Area M salmon fisheries for the purported benefit of Yukon-bound salmon, he has demonstrated a substantial and material personal interest in the matters espoused by many of the regulatory proposals currently before the Board of Fisheries. His employment by Calista as an attorney and his repeated public appearances during which he identified himself as a Calista attorney before advocating to restrict Area M salmon fisheries "transcend[s] his own private concerns" about the Area M salmon fishery, demonstrating a substantial and material personal interest in restricting or closing Area M salmon fisheries. *See* 1993 Op. Att'y Gen (Jan.21; 663-93-0259), 1993 WL 595764, at *4 (Alaska A.G.).⁴ The Board Chair's determination that he had no conflict is not supported by the facts or the law, and itself is a violation of the EBEA (see section 3 below).

⁴ The Chair attempted to discount the applicability of this 1993 Attorney General opinion to Mr. Chamberlain's situation, stating that the 1993 AG Opinion focused primarily on a State Board member's conflict related to that Board member's performance and administration of a discrete contract for the advancement of providing access to subsistence users. This is incorrect. The Board Member's leadership role within a Native Association "[gave] him a substantial personal interest in the benefits to be derived from as well as the obligations to be performed by the Native Association under the Native Association Contract" with the National Park Service to collect data on "customary and traditional subsistence use patterns." 1993 WL 595764, at *1 (emphasis added). But it was not just the contract that created the Board member's personal interest in subsistence matters; it was also the fact that he "actively represents" the constituent members of the Native Association on subsistence matters:

Matters attending the rights of subsistence users in Y are important matters that the board regularly addresses. *Id.* Where the board deliberates on proposals that actually or potentially advance the rights of subsistence users over other user groups in Y, we believe that A's participation as a board member will put him in a conflict between his interests and responsibilities to the Native Association and its constituents (Native subsistence users in Y) and his public trust responsibilities to discharge impartially his duties as a member of the board on behalf of all user groups. In such instances, it would be extremely problematic for A to remain impartial and unbiased, or to refrain from exercising any undue influence or otherwise misuse his official position on behalf of the Native Association groups whom he actively represents, while serving as a member of the board.

Id. at *4.

The Board Chair's reliance on a 1994 Attorney General opinion in determining that Mr. Chamberlain does not have a conflict of interest is misplaced. That opinion, dated February 17, 1993,⁵ analyzed whether a State Board member's participation on two private corporation boards of directors created a conflict of interest under the EBEA. *See* 1994 Op. Att'y Gen (Feb.17, 1993; 663-93-0257), 1993 WL 667345, at *1 (Alaska A.G.). The State Board member described in that Opinion had not personally advocated for the positions taken by the organizations for which he held director positions. *See id.* at *2. Instead, the potential conflict was created by his organization's position on the State Board's implementation of a State statute. No conflict was found because of the organization's lack of direct financial benefit from such implementation and that any tangible benefit from such implementation would be enjoyed by all users across the State. *Id.* at *3.

This situation is markedly different. Mr. Chamberlain himself has advocated to this Board, as well as the State Legislature, to take certain positions regarding the Area M salmon fishery. He has done so both as a personal matter and potentially on behalf of his employer or to his employer's benefit. His interest is not one "possessed generally by the public or a large class of persons to which the public officer belongs." *See* AS 39.52.110(b).⁶ Unlike the general public, he has actually appeared before this Board and before the State Legislature to expressly advocate for more restrictions on the Area M salmon fishery, and he repeatedly identifies himself as an assistant general counsel for Calista when he does so. This creates the distinct impression that his advocacy is done on behalf of his employer and as representative of his employer's shareholders. This goes far beyond a general interest in State fisheries shared by the general public. Nor is he a member of "a large class of persons" in his role as an attorney for Calista. While Mr. Chamberlain appeared to suggest that his personal interests are the same as any shareholder in any Alaska Native

⁵ This was submitted into the Feb. 2026 meeting record by the Board Chair as RC029. https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/static/regulations/regprocess/fisheriesboard/pdfs/2025-2026/akpen/rcs/RC029_Member_Carlson-Van_Dort_1994_Ethics_Opinion.pdf

⁶ As stated in the Eastern Aleutian tribes' letter, Mr. Chamberlain also has a financial interest created by his employment with Calista that is substantial and material, and is not of the kind generally shared by the public. In addition, Mr. Chamberlain disclosed on February 19, 2026 that his father, an immediate relative under the EBEA, holds a commercial salmon drift net permit on the middle Kuskokwim River that has not been used since 1996. As ably argued by Member Godfrey during the Feb. 19 ethics disclosures, the Board's internal policy on whether and how such permits create conflicts of interest is not clear and the policy, such as it is, is not consistently applied. The potential increase in the economic value of the permit as a result of Board action is sufficient to create a potential conflict of interest that must be thoroughly addressed for the same reasons discussed below in section 2 with regard to Board Member Irwin. *See* 2009 Op. Att'y Gen. (May 21, 2009: No. 661-07-0014), 2009 WL 1664961, at *2 (Alaska A.G.) (EBEA analysis should "focus on whether [Board member]'s official actions in a matter could likely increase or decrease the value of his interests or otherwise materially and substantially affect his interests."). Nor is this a conjectural situation: Mr. Chamberlain's testimony to this Board on February 23, 2023 indicates that his advocacy against Area M salmon fisheries is, at least in part, due to a desire to increase Kuskokwim salmon returns so that his family's commercial fishing permit, which is currently "not worth the paper it's written on," can be used again, and he stated that if he was a member of the Board, he would advocate for exactly that. *See* footnote 3.

corporation, this is disingenuous. It is not his role as a Calista shareholder that creates his interest in the matter of Area M salmon fisheries; it is his advocacy against those exact fisheries in his personal life, which Calista has used to its own benefit.

Furthermore, we disagree with the Board's continued conflation of financial interests and personal interests under the EBEA. The statute itself separates these types of interests. "Personal interest" is defined as "an interest held or involvement by a public officer . . . from which, or as a result of which, a person or organization receives a benefit," and "benefit" means "anything that is to a person's advantage or self-interest, . . . regardless of the financial gain" AS 39.52.960(3) ("benefit"), AS 39.52.960(18) ("personal interest"). If a personal interest is itself substantial and material, it creates a conflict of interest and the analysis ends. Going further to require that the personal interest also involve some substantial and material financial interest would render the personal-interest definition in the statute meaningless.

The Board Chair apparently based her determination that Mr. Chamberlain's advocacy did not create a conflict of interest on the fact that the advocacy occurred before his service on the Board (as stated on the record on Feb. 23, 2026 at the outset of the meeting day). But the EBEA does not make such a distinction; the sole question is whether the Board member's "actions may affect his current personal and financial interests." 2009 Op. Att'y Gen. (May 21, 2009: No. 661-07-0014), 2009 WL 1664961, at *2 (Alaska A.G.). If the personal or financial interest "survive[s] after the officer's state service begins" and the Board member "will continue to receive . . . benefits" from a personal or financial interest, then a conflict of interest may exist. *See id.* There is no time limitation on a personal interest that creates a conflict of interest under the EBEA. While divestiture prior to Board service may be sufficient to remove a financial conflict of interest, the same logic would not necessarily apply to a personal interest. This is particularly true with personal conflicts that are created by firmly-held ideological positions such as a desire to "do whatever it takes" to preserve one's traditional culture and way of life. *See, e.g.,* footnote 3. Furthermore, Mr. Chamberlain has not divested himself of the two financial interests described herein (his employment by Calista and his father's commercial salmon permit on the Kuskokwim), either of which is sufficient to create a conflict of interest. Thus, the fact that Calista did not author any of the proposals currently before the Board or that Mr. Chamberlain's advocacy predated his Board service is a meaningless distinction not consistent with the plain text of the EBEA.

Compounding this violation, Mr. Chamberlain appears to have made an incorrect statement on the record during his ethics disclosure on February 19, 2026. At the Board of Fisheries proceeding on February 19, 2026, Board Member Carpenter asked Mr. Chamberlain — directly and on the record during conflict of interest discussions — the following question: *"I'm going to ask one final question, and this is specific to either in your personal capacity or in your professional capacity, have you ever advocated in either one of those situations during the legislative session or through a public forum to advocate for closing Area M fisheries in general?"* Mr. Chamberlain answered: *"No, I have not."* The official transcript of a May 1, 2023, Alaska Senate Resources Standing Committee hearing directly contradicts this denial.⁷

⁷ The transcript of the Senate Resource Standing Committee hearing is available at https://www.alaska.gov/legis/committees/RSRC/2023/050123/RSRC_050123_001.pdf. SB 128 was titled "An Act temporarily closing the commercial salmon fishery in a portion of the Alaska Peninsula and Aleutian Islands." The bill, if adopted as introduced, would have closed all of Area M to commercial salmon fishing from June 10 through June 30.

https://www.alaska.gov/legis/committees/RSRC/2023/050123/RSRC_050123_001.pdf

At the May 1, 2023 hearing, Mr. Chamberlain appeared as Assistant General Counsel for Calista Corporation as listed in the official witness register. The hearing was a formal Alaska Senate Resources Standing Committee meeting during the 2023-24 Legislative session, and is documented as a matter of public record. Mr. Chamberlain stated that he was testifying to address the criticisms of Senate Bill 128. He then argued the Aleutians could absorb a fishery closure, that the statutory subsistence priority warranted legislative action overriding the Board of Fisheries' 2023 actions regarding the Area M salmon fishery management plan, and that "statutory guardrails" should be implemented — all directed at restricting or closing Area M commercial fishing as proposed in Senate Bill 128. The denial is not a matter of interpretation or degree. The transcript is a verbatim official record of a public proceeding in which Mr. Chamberlain did precisely what he denied doing.

This is a violation of AS 39.52.220, which requires Board of Fisheries' members to disclose on the public record, and to the designated Ethics Supervisor and the Attorney General, any matter in which the Board member is involved that may result in a violation of the EBEA. AS 39.52.270 requires that a public officer certify that his ethics disclosure is "to the best of the public officer's knowledge, . . . true, correct, and complete." This includes ethics disclosures made on the public record under AS 39.52.220(a). *See* AS 39.52.270(c). Making a false sworn statement is, of course, perjury. AS 11.56.200.

While public officers may be presumed to "conduct their official duties honestly and impartially," in some situations, "an officer's personal interests in a matter may be so significant that they overcome that presumption." 2007 Op. Att'y Gen. (Sept. 18; No. 661-07-0014), 2007 WL 3281939 (Alaska A.G.), at *5 (emphasis added). Making a demonstrably false statement on the public record during ethics disclosures that masks a personal conflict of interest is more than sufficient to overcome this presumption.

It also calls into question Mr. Chamberlain's statements that he believes he can act impartially on the proposals to restrict Area M salmon fisheries currently before the Board. Regardless, such statements are irrelevant under the EBEA, which provides that a public officer "may not...take or withhold action in order to affect a matter in which the public officer has a personal or financial interest." AS 39.52.120(b)(4) (emphasis added). If a Board member has a personal interest in a matter, the Board member may not take or withhold action to affect that matter. There is no exception for matters where a Board member states a subjective belief that he or she can remain impartial despite a clear conflict of interest. Such an exception would gut the meaning and effect of the EBEA, allowing a public officer with conflicts of interest to participate in all kinds of actions that benefit the officer personally, and asking the public to just trust that the officer will be fair and impartial.

The Board Chair's failure to take appropriate action under the EBEA does not excuse Mr. Chamberlain of his obligation to avoid taking or withholding action on a matter in which he has a substantial and material personal interest. AS 39.52.270(b). His continued participation in the ongoing meeting, during which he has actively questioned testifying individuals about the Area M salmon fishery, is a daily violation of the EBEA.

2. Violation of AS 39.52.120(b) by Olivia Irwin

On February 18, 2026, Ms. Irwin disclosed that her aunt possesses two commercial salmon fishing permits (net and fish wheel) for the Tanana River, but that the permits have not been fished since 1993 and there is no intention to continue fishing those permits. Ms. Irwin, in response to a

question from Board Member Godfrey, disclosed that she had not received any formal opinion from the Attorney General's office as to whether the permits created a potential conflict of interest. Mr. Godfrey opined that such permits could ostensibly increase in value depending on actions taken on the specific proposals before the Board, to which Department of Law attorney Mr. Lee responded that "an aunt is statutorily a conflict" due to the definition of "immediate family member," and that the Department of Law has not weighed in on whether Ms. Irwin's aunt's permits create a conflict of interest. Mr. Godfrey noted that he was previously disqualified from acting on proposals before the Board due to his uncle holding a permit that also had not been fished in years, suggesting an inconsistent approach by the Board in resolving these types of conflicts and the need to have a determination by the Department of Law on such matters. Chair Carlson-Van Dort indicated she, as Chair, makes such determinations for Board members, and that her approach is that when the permit is not held in the regulatory area under consideration, i.e., not in Area M, then it is unnecessary to analyze whether such permit creates a conflict of interest. It is only if there is a permit held in the specific regulatory area under consideration by the Board that the Board must look at whether there is a substantial or material "investment" in that permit. That analysis is incorrect as a matter of law and thus violates the EBEA.

As correctly pointed out by Board Member Wood, the location of a fishing permit outside of the direct regulatory area being considered can be relevant given the substance of the proposals before the Board. The question is not limited to the geographic location of the permit, but whether the permit creates a personal or financial interest in a matter before the Board. *See* 1996 Alaska Op. Att'y Gen. (Inf.) 5 (Nov. 29, 1996: No. 661-95-0214), 1994 WL 1029333 at *2 (Alaska A.G. 1994) ("possible conflicts could arise with respect to allocation matters that may not appear to relate directly to regulation of [Board member's] fishery. Board decisions that affect the allocation of fish to other competing fisheries or user groups will have an impact on the financial interests of fishers and permit holders in the Z River Fishery, which might be sufficiently significant and certain to warrant a finding of a conflict for Mr. X."). Furthermore, the sheer number of public comments and public testimony from individuals and organizations in the Yukon region submitted during this current Board of Fisheries meeting taking positions on the various proposals to restrict Area M salmon fisheries belies any argument that ownership of a fishing permit in the Yukon could not possibly create a conflict of interest with regard to those proposals. Thus, there are significant questions whether the Chair properly applied the law to determine that Ms. Irwin had no conflicts of interest and whether the failure of the Chair to seek guidance from the Department of Law on this issue was appropriate.

We also renew our complaint that Ms. Irwin's recent employment with the Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association (YRDFA) created a personal conflict of interest that is not alleviated by her resignation from YRDFA less than three weeks before the start of this Board meeting. As Ms. Irwin stated on the record during the colloquy about her ethics disclosure, in her position immediately before her resignation as a Community Liaison, she hosted community meetings to hear from the public "on what they were seeing in terms of fishing in the summer and listening to matters coming up before them and providing a space for community members to share observations from their fishing time." Incredibly, on the same day that Ms. Irwin made this disclosure in an effort to assure the Board her YRDFA work did not create a conflict of interest,

YRDFA submitted an RC into the meeting record (RC054)⁸ containing information from community members regarding their observations about their summer fishing time. The fact that information that YRDFA gathered from community members while Ms. Irwin was employed at YRDFA as a community liaison is now being used to advocate for proposals before the Board creates an impermissible conflict of interest for Ms. Irwin.

Without belaboring the point, this is almost the exact situation described in the 1993 Attorney General opinion discussed above, and it does not matter that YRDFA has not authored any of the proposals before the Board or that Ms. Irwin left YRDFA three weeks ago:

No doubt, at some point in the near future, either the Native Association or its constituent members will seek to influence the board on subsistence matters in Y very likely using the same data being collected under the Native Association Contract. Certainly in that situation, A would have an immediate and glaring conflict of interest in serving on the board on matters relating to the Native Association and its constituent members while serving as the Native Association's President. AS 39.52.160(a). We do not believe that we must await the time when the Native Association or its constituent members press their interests before the board before we are able to discern A's potential conflict of interest . . . Even if A were to disassociate himself from the Native Association and the Native Association Contract, there still might be a conflict of interest problem posed in situations where the Native Association or its constituents press subsistence proposals before the board.

1993 WL 595764, at *5 (emphasis added). It is also noteworthy that YRDFA, despite being a regular submitter of public comments to the Board of Fisheries,⁹ did not submit any written public comments to the Board before the public comment deadline of February 3, 2026. Yet YRDFA has at least two of its employees here presenting public testimony (Serena Fitka, YRDFA Executive Director, at timestamp 3:26:11 on February 19, and Grace Kirkey, at timestamp 4:39:50 on February 19). Ms. Alstrom testified that YRDFA supports proposals that would reduce fishing

⁸ Available in the meeting record at

https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/static/regulation/propose_comments/board/pdfs/2023-2024/2023-2024agenda.pdf, at PDF page 110-111).

⁹ Some examples include, but are not limited to (1) YRDFA's letter to the Board of Fisheries at its 2023 Alaska Peninsula finfish meeting supporting Proposal 140 to greatly restrict Area M's June salmon fishery (PC 191 re Proposal 140,

https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/static/regulation/propose_comments/board/pdfs/2023-2024/2023-2024agenda.pdf,

https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/static/regulation/propose_comments/board/pdfs/2023-2024/2023-2024agenda.pdf, at PDF page 614); and (2)

YRDFA's September 2023 letter to the Board of Fisheries supporting Agenda Change Request 2 which sought to repeal the Board of Fisheries changes to the Area M June salmon management plan adopted in February 2023 (PC 41,

https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/static/regulation/propose_comments/board/pdfs/2023-2024/2023-2024agenda.pdf, at PDF page 110-111). Anti-Area M comments from YRDFA submitted to the Board of Fisheries go all the way back to 2013.

https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/static/regulation/propose_comments/board/pdfs/2013-2013agenda/pdfs/2013-2013agenda.pdf

time and increase opportunities for additional chum salmon to pass through Area M without being harvested, specifically proposal 131 and 136, and proposals to reduce seine net sizes in Area M. Ms. Kirkey testified that she speaks on behalf of YRDFA and that Area M commercial fisheries "intercept" chum "bound for western rivers." She also described in detail the data contained in RC054, which again was ostensibly collected by YRDFA while Ms. Irwin was employed by YRDFA. Again, the entire course of dealing suggests potential impropriety that should be fully investigated.

The Board Chair's failure to take appropriate action under the EBEA does not excuse Ms. Irwin of her obligation to avoid taking or withholding action on a matter in which she has a substantial and material personal interest. AS 39.52.270(b). Her continued participation in the ongoing meeting, during which she has actively questioned testifying individuals about the Area M salmon fishery, is a daily violation of the EBEA.

3. Violation of AS 39.52.190 by Marit Carlson-Van Dort as Ethics Supervisor

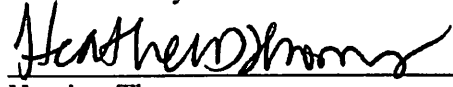
Chair Carlson-Van Dort, as the ethics supervisor for Board Members Chamberlain and Irwin, violated the EBEA by determining that Mr. Chamberlain and Ms. Irwin could fully participate in the Feb. 18-24, 2026 Board of Fisheries meeting. It violates the EBEA for a public officer to "knowingly aid another public officer" in violating the EBEA. AS 39.52.190. The Chair's determinations that neither Mr. Chamberlain nor Ms. Irwin had conflicts of interest regarding matters before the Board at this meeting is contrary to the facts in the record and misapplies the EBEA.

Request for Immediate Action

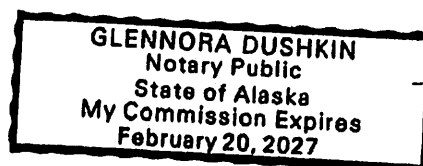
I respectfully request expedited consideration of this complaint to ensure that no Board action is taken in violation of the EBEA. To that end, as a conservative measure, Mr. Chamberlain and Ms. Irwin should recuse themselves from deliberating and voting on proposals 108, 127, 128, 129, 131, 132, 133, 136, 147, 148, 151 and 152, or any other proposals seeking to restrict the Area M fishery with regards to AYK salmon, to avoid further violation of the EBEA and resulting voiding of Board action taken in violation of the EBEA (AS 39.52.430(c)).

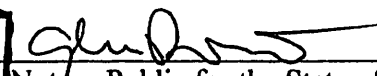
VERIFICATION

I, Heather Thompson, hereby verify that the facts stated in this Complaint are true and correct to the best of my information and belief.


Heather Thompson

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN TO before me this 23 day of February, 2026.




Notary Public for the State of Alaska



Outlook

Re: Confidential request for Department of Law Opinion on Ethics Disclosure

From Chamberlain, Curtis S (DFG) <curt.chamberlain@alaska.gov>**Date** Sun 10/4/2026 12:25 PM**To** Alloway, Jessie M (LAW) <jessie.alloway@alaska.gov>; Stinson, Matthew P (LAW) <matthew.stinson@alaska.gov>

1 attachment (425 KB)

Atty General Opinion re EagleExit Participation June 2026_Redacted.pdf;

Dear Ms. Alloway,

I am writing in response to your email from Thursday, September 17, 2026, seeking information about Calista's fisheries-related opinions and advocacy. Thank you for your patience as I prepared this response. I was concerned that while you state that your questions are not intended to pre-judge that I have a conflict, it is apparent that you are asking the wrong questions and misapplying the law. I would like an advisory opinion that is consistent with past opinions of your office and with the applicable law. I am furthermore dismayed that you responded days just within the 60-day time limit with questions that could have been asked within days after I submitted the inquiry. We are rapidly approaching the October work session where numerous Agenda Change Requests are addressing the voided proposals. I thus urge you not to hamper executive branch authority and state rulemaking with improper conflict-of-interest standards.

The prior opinions of your office and persuasive court decisions counsel in favor of interpreting Alaska law to permit a public official to participate in rulemaking that aligns with his personal opinions and/or his employer's opinions. In your recent email, you asked about my employer Calista Corporation's advocacy work on salmon-fishing regulation and subsistence rights in the State of Alaska. To be sure, Calista has stated various opinions about these areas of public concern over the years, as have many Alaskans, but Calista's positions prior to my employment are outside of my knowledge. All advocacy in my tenure has been previously discussed. More importantly, these areas of inquiry are improper and immaterial for determining whether a Board of Fisheries member has a disqualifying personal interest under Alaska's Executive Branch Ethics Act (the Act). As discussed below, proper inquiry into whether I have an improper "personal interest" in Area M regulations due to my employment at Calista should be directed to whether Calista Corporation derives any financial or otherwise tangible benefit from Area M regulations.

The answer to that question is no. Calista Corporation has no financial interests in fishing in Area M or in any other area of the state. Rather, like most Alaskans, both Calista and I have opinions on Alaska's fisheries because fishing is a way of life in Alaska.

The Act should not be construed to bar a state official from engaging in rulemaking decisions that may align with his or his employer's opinions. Like all State Boards, the Board of Fisheries is comprised of

Alaskan residents who are appointed because of their opinions, knowledge and experience on Alaska's fisheries. Those opinions are not only unavoidable but desirable. Governor Dunleavy appointed me to the Board because I formed strong opinions on Alaska fisheries, and the Alaska Legislature confirmed my appointment after I publicly testified to the Alaska Senate in relation to Senate Bill 128 that would have restricted Area M salmon fishing.[1]

No provision of the Act turns public-policy advocacy by a state board member or his employer into an impermissible conflict requiring recusal in rulemaking on that subject. Under the Act, a "personal interest" means "an interest held or involvement by a public officer, or the officer's immediate family member or parent, including membership in any organization, whether fraternal, nonprofit, for profit, charitable, or political, from which, or as a result of which, a person or organization receives a benefit[.]" AS 39.52.960(18). "Benefit" means "anything that is to a person's advantage or self-interest, or from which a person profits, regardless of the financial gain, including any dividend, pension, salary, acquisition, agreement to purchase, transfer of money, deposit, loan or loan guarantee, promise to pay, grant, contract, lease, money, goods, service, privilege, exemption, patronage, advantage, advance, or anything of value[.]" AS 39.52.960(3). The definition of benefit does not include results that happen to align with an employer's opinions on matters with statewide effects that have no financial effect on employer.

Opinions from 1993 and 1998 recognize that a "benefit" under the Act must be something tangible, like a financial interest, and not mere opinion alignment on public policy. In 1993, the natural resources assistant attorney general opined that a state board member's vote that aligned with the advocacy of a company for which he served as a board member did not constitute an impermissible conflict of interest. The opinion explained that because the company did not possess a significant financial interest in the state board's decision, the state board member likewise did not have an impermissible financial interest in the state board's decision due to him sitting on the private company's board: "Even if the State Board is persuaded to implement the 1992 law in accordance with [private company's] views, [private company] does not itself drive any tangible, financial benefit from such action." 1993 WL 667345 at *3. As to personal interests, the opinion explained that the state board's decisions affected people across the state and therefore any decision was not sufficiently connected to a personal gain: "[E]ven if the State Board takes action in conformance with [private company's] advice on how to implement the 1992 law, any benefits that might flow from such action inure to the benefit of all users across the state, not just the community whom [private company] represents." *Id.*; see also AS 39.52.110(b)(1) and (2).

In 1998, an assistant attorney general for the department of transportation opined that the chair of a "regional for-profit corporation" which owned "many large parcels of undeveloped land located within the region" was not precluded from serving as a "regional director" of a department of the State. 1998 WL 1108883 at *1. The opinion explained that the State's and corporation's interests intersected in two obvious areas: the corporation's land and its network. *Id.* at *4. Although the state regional director position included authority that could affect development in the region and benefit the corporation's lands, he or she could avoid any conflict with pecuniary benefit to the corporation by recusing themselves from discussion and decision-making on such projects. *Id.* at **3-4. The opinion was careful to note that: "The mere fact that a public official is also member of an organization that advocates a certain public policy does not, without more, mean that the public official may not take official action

that advances or negates that policy.” *Id.* at *3 (citing 1993 Informal Opinion). The opinion ended with practical guidance that the department should “take steps to ensure that [the person at issue] does not participate in either the consideration of projects [through a specific project directive or through raising a project’s priority on the department’s list] that relate to the corporation.” *Id.* at *5.

These opinions properly limited “personal interests” arising from concurrent private employment to tangible, financial interests, specific to the employer.

A recent ethics opinion dealt with “personal interests” in the context of agency *adjudication* of particular cases. In 2026, the state ethics attorney issued a decision denying reconsideration of a prior advisory opinion by the Department of Law.^[2] The advisory opinion was requested by the Chair of the Local Boundary Commission (the state body that determines, among other things, which communities are included in Boroughs) as to whether one of the LBC’s commissioners (Clayton Trotter) was precluded from participating on any forthcoming Eaglexit petition. Eaglexit is the movement for Eagle River and other suburbs of Anchorage to detach from the Municipality of Anchorage. Prior to appointment to the LBC, Trotter (a UAA professor and Alaska attorney) had strongly advocated at public meetings in support of the Eaglexit movement and solicited funds to support the movement through a legal nonprofit for which he served as general counsel.

The decision discussed Trotter’s pre-LBC advocacy work on behalf of Eaglexit, noting that his statements

demonstrate direct affiliation, advocacy, and organizational support of a single-purpose entity whose explicit goal is to submit and advance a detachment petition that will come before the Local Boundary Commission. Under AS 39.52.960(18), a “personal interest” includes involvement in any organization from which, *or as a result of which*, a person or organization receives a benefit. . . .

. . . . The nature of Eaglexit as a single-issue advocacy group means your early organizational assistance bears a lasting connection to the organization’s sole objective — obtaining Commission approval of detachment. Your statements express identification with the organization and its goal. Potentially, even after more formal assistance to Eaglexit, your recorded remarks indicate continuing personal investment in the detachment effort.

See attached opinion at 8 (emphasis in original). This opinion correctly concluded that Trotter’s advocacy work precluded him from participating in the LBC’s *adjudication* of any forthcoming Eaglexit petition. The opinion’s reasoning that advocacy work on a subject matter can create an impermissible “personal interest” under the Act is limited to when an agency acts in an adjudicatory function and should not be applied to agency rulemaking.

Court cases explain why Alaska should not misinterpret the Act’s definition of “benefit” to include mere issue alignment where no tangible, financial advantage is at stake in agency rulemaking proceedings. The seminal legal discussion on this issue is *Association of National Advertisers, Inc. v. F.T.C.*, 627 F.2d 1151, 1165-1170 (D.C. Cir. 1979). There, an advertising association sued the Federal Trade Commission to prevent the chairman of the Commission from participating in rulemaking on children’s advertising. *Id.* at 1154. The advertising association pointed out that prior to his appointment to the FTC, the chairman had forcefully advocated (at conferences, on TV, in newspapers, and in magazines) for the Commission to restrict television advertising of sugary foods targeted at children. *Id.* at 1171. The

advertising association asserted that the recusal standard for agency adjudicatory proceedings applied to agency rulemaking proceedings. *Id.* The recusal standard for adjudicatory proceedings was whether “a disinterested observer may conclude that (the decisionmaker) has in some measure adjudged the facts as well as the law of a particular case in advance of hearing it.” *Id.* at 1158 (quoting *Cinderella Career & Finishing Schools, Inc. v. FTC*, 425 F.2d 583, 591 (D.C. Cir. 1970)). The court called this the “prejudgment” standard or *Cinderella* standard, and held that it could not be imposed on public officials engaged in agency rulemaking because, to be effective, that work requires debate on matters of public concern:

The *Cinderella* view of neutral and detached adjudicator is simply an inapposite role model for an administrator who must translate broad statutory commands into concrete social policies. If an agency official is to be effective he must engage in debate and discussion about the policy matters before him.

Id. at 1169-70. Thus, the court adopted a standard that took into consideration that “rulemaking involves the kind of issues where a month of experience will be worth a year of hearings.” *Id.* at 1168 (original quotes and citation omitted). The court held that an agency decisionmaker should only be disqualified from rulemaking “when there has been a clear and convincing showing that the agency member has an unalterably closed mind on matters critical to the disposition of the proceeding.” *Id.* at 1170. Because the chairman’s advocacy showed only predisposition and not an unalterably closed mind on the matter of television advertisements targeting children with sugary foods, the court held that he was not disqualified from participating in the rulemaking on that subject. *Id.* at 1178.

Notably, the court stated that a different standard would infringe on the inherent political process of agency rulemaking:

Finally, we eschew formulation of a disqualification standard that impinges upon the political process. An administrator’s presence within an agency reflects the political judgment of the President and the Senate. As Judge Prettyman of this court aptly noted, a “Commission’s view of what is beets in the public interest may change from time to time. Commissions themselves change, underlying philosophies differ, and experience often dictates changes.” (citation omitted). We are concerned that implementation of the *Cinderella* standard [looking at merely whether the public official could be seen as biased] would plunge courts into the midst of political battles concerning the proper formulation of administrative policy. We serve as guarantors of statutory and constitutional rights, but not as arbiters of the political process. Accordingly, we will not order the disqualification of a rulemaker absent the most compelling proof that he is unable to carry out his duties in a constitutionally permissible manner.

Id. at 1178. To opine that that Alaska’s Executive Branch Ethics Act precludes those who advocate on an issue from participating in agency rulemaking decisions is to ignore these political realities.

Another state supreme court has looked at this precise issue: the Iowa Supreme Court in *Iowa Farm Bureau Federation v. Environmental Protection Commission*, 850 N.W.2d 403 (Iowa 2014). In that case, the Iowa governor appointed Susan Heathcote to Iowa’s Environmental Protection Commission. The Commission’s purview is to “protect Iowa’s environment and conserve its

natural resources.” *Id.* at 406. While also serving as a commissioner on the state board, Heathcoat was the Water Program Director of the Iowa Environmental Council, a nonprofit corporation aimed at protecting Iowa’s natural environment. Indeed, her work on the nonprofit predated her state appointment by more than a decade. As the Water Program Director, she advocated for policies for higher quality of Iowa’s water resources. *Id.* at 407. She worked on a new antidegradation water standard that was put before the Commission for approval. *Id.* at 408. Heathcoat participated in that vote and the Commission approved it. *Id.* at 408.

Agricultural organizations challenged the Commission’s approval of the new water standard, arguing that Iowa’s Government Ethics and Lobbying Act required Heathcoat to recuse from participating in the Commission’s consideration of the new standard due to her “dual role of Heathcote as a strong and active advocate, both personally and on behalf of her employer, [before the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (“INDR”)] at the same time as she was a member of the Commission that would ultimately be responsible to approve an antidegradation rule developed by the INDR.” *Id.* at 411.

The Court rejected this argument, applying Iowa’s state ethics act and the common-law on conflicts of interest, because agency rulemaking—unlike agency adjudicatory actions—are not meant to be made by people who are blank slates without opinions bearing on the agency. *Id.* at 410-422. The Court noted different standards of disqualification based on a conflict of interest applied if the public official was engaged in a rulemaking as opposed to engaged in an adjudicatory function. *Id.* at 414-15.

The Court noted that the state political system and realities of agency rulemaking counseled against disqualifying public officials engaged in rulemaking functions because of her and her employer’s advocacy of policy aligned with that employment. As to the political system, governors are permitted and do pick individuals “who may share the views of the governor on the subject matter of a commission or individuals who may even publicly advocate those views in their personal or professional life.” *Id.* at 411. As to the realities of rulemaking, agency officials “*must* engage in debate and discussion about policy matters before the Agency, and informal contacts between agencies and the public are the ‘bread and butter’ of the process of administration.” *Id.* at 416 (emphasis original; original quotation marks and citation omitted).

The Iowa Supreme Court held that a public official serving in a rulemaking function is only disqualified upon a showing that met the *Association of National Advertisers’s* standard of clear and convincing evidence that the official had an unalterably closed mind on the matter. *Id.* at 410. Because Heathcote’s prior and continued advocacy in favor of a new water standard for her private employer showed only that she had a “preconceived position” on the matter and not an unalterably closed mind on the matter, the Court held that she was not disqualified from state rulemaking on that subject. Indeed, paraphrasing Justice William Renquist, the Court ended: “Susan Heathcoate’s years of experienced and continued employment as Water Policy Director for the [environmental nonprofit] are the source of indispensable qualifications, not the source of disqualifying bias.” *Id.* at 422.

When investigating and issuing guidance on whether private employment advocacy alignment qualifies as an impermissible “personal interest” requiring recusal, you should today follow your office’s 1993 and 1998 opinions. The fact that I may share an opinion with my employer does not

convey a benefit to me or my employer unless one of us will derive a tangible financial benefit or tangible advantage specific to the employer from the rulemaking. Any tangible benefit that will inure to people across Alaska is not a "benefit" captured by the Act. If your guidance states a standard for when advocacy alignment alone constitutes an improper personal interest of a public official that standard should take into account the material differences between agency rulemaking and agency adjudicatory functions. The reasoning of the August 2026 opinion that a Local Boundary Commission's personal advocacy in favor of Eaglexit precluded him from participating the Local Boundary Commission's adjudication of any forthcoming Eaglexit petition should not be extended to agency rulemaking.

Finally, I am concerned that your questions to me about Calista's opinions would better be directed to Calista. For example, it is not clear if you are asking about Calista's advocacy and opinions during my tenure with the company (all of which that I am aware of have been provided), or if you are concerned with prior positions (to which I have no personal knowledge). Further, I am not clear what would amount to an opinion of the company. Are you inquiring about formal testimony and opinion letters on company letterhead, or informal statements by officers or employees? I am not sure how I would begin to fully answer the questions that you have posed, and suggest that if you continue to think they are material, you should direct them to Calista. I would be happy to put you in touch with Calista's leadership and would ask that you consider focusing and making your questions more specific as to time and topic if you would like to further explore what seems to me an immaterial and irrelevant angle given the discussion above.

Thank you again for your time and attention to this matter, as well as for your anticipated rapid response. If you have any further questions or concerns, I hope that you will reach out to me quickly so that we may bring this inquiry to an efficient and accurate resolution.

Kindest regards,

Curt

[1] During my confirmation hearings, Representative Louise Stutes specifically questioned me on my employment with Calista Corporation and I responded that Calista Corporation had never asked me to adopt any positions per my proposed seat on the Board of Fisheries, and that on the Board of Fisheries my decisions would not be made based on the interests of Calista. See Alaska State Legislature Joint Meeting (House Special Committee on Fisheries and House Resources Standing Committee) (April 25, 2024) (at 6:11:22 p.m. timestamp) (available at: <https://www.akleg.gov/PDF/33/M/HFSH2024-04-251804.PDF>).

[2] Available at: <https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/web/Portals/4/pub/LBC/Meetings/Aug%2025%202026/AGO%20re%20C%20Trotter%20Reconsideration%20Request%208-28-2026.pdf>.

From: Alloway, Jessie M (LAW) <jessie.alloway@alaska.gov>

Sent: Wednesday, September 16, 2026 5:03 PM

To: Chamberlain, Curtis S (DFG) <curt.chamberlain@alaska.gov>; Stinson, Matthew P (LAW) <matthew.stinson@alaska.gov>

Subject: Re: Confidential request for Department of Law Opinion on Ethics Disclosure

Hi Curtis-

We are working on your advisory opinion and have some follow up questions.

Under the Ethics Act, a public officer may not take or withhold official action in a matter in which the public officer has a personal or financial interest. AS 39.52.120(b)(4). A "financial interest" is "an interest held by a public officer or an immediate family member, which includes an involvement or ownership of an interest in a business, including a property ownership, or a professional or private relationship, that is a source of income, or from which, or as a result of which, a person has received or expects to receive a financial benefit." AS 39.52.960(9)(A). A "personal interest" is "an interest held or involvement by a public officer, or the officer's immediate family member or parent, including membership, in any organization, whether fraternal, nonprofit, for profit, charitable, or political, from which, or as a result of which, a person or organization receives a benefit." AS 39.52.960(15).

You have a personal and financial interest in Calista. The question we need to address is whether and to what extent Calista has an interest in the proposed Area M regulations. I understand that your position is that Calista has no interest because it has not submitted or advocated for any of the proposed regulations. That may be true, but to properly analyze your potential conflict of interest, we need to fully understand the entirety of Calista's interests. In your disclosure to the Board, you acknowledged that "Calista has advocated for subsistence rights under state law, an amendment to the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act to restore Aboriginal hunting and fishing rights for Alaska Natives." In your written disclosure to us, you provided some additional information, but we still require more information.

1. When you say, "Calista has advocated for subsistence rights under state law," what do you mean? Is it limited to the proposal of the constitutional amendment? What was that proposed constitutional amendment? If it was not limited to the constitutional amendment, what other advocacy did Calista engage in?
2. What is "AFN's response to Proposal 24-1" that you mentioned in your written disclosure.

What we need to know is whether any of these proposals/advocacy pieces are measures meant to obtain what the Area M restrictions would accomplish but through other means. In other words, you indicated that Calista does not involve you in regulatory matters. It is possible that Calista is attempting to limit Area M fishing through other means besides regulation, and that information is relevant to whether you have a conflict.

In asking you these questions, I want to emphasize that we are not pre-judging whether you have a conflict. We need to have this information to analyze whether you have a conflict.

Lastly, in your written disclosure to us, you indicated that "Calista has never engaged me in any regulatory discussions related to any matters before the Board of Fisheries, let alone advocated for or against any proposal before the board." Are you representing that Calista has never advocated for or against any proposal before the board? Clarification on what you mean by this statement is needed.

Thanks,

Jessie Alloway

Assistant Attorney General

Opinions, Appeals, and Ethics Section

1031 W. 4th Avenue #200

Anchorage, AK 99501

From: Chamberlain, Curtis S (DFG) <curt.chamberlain@alaska.gov>
Sent: Monday, July 27, 2026 4:10 PM
To: Stinson, Matthew P (LAW) <matthew.stinson@alaska.gov>; Alloway, Jessie M (LAW) <jessie.alloway@alaska.gov>
Subject: Re: Confidential request for Department of Law Opinion on Ethics Disclosure

Thank you, Matt for your quick response. Please let me know if there is anything further you need.

From: Stinson, Matthew P (LAW) <matthew.stinson@alaska.gov>
Sent: Monday, July 27, 2026 3:43 PM
To: Chamberlain, Curtis S (DFG) <curt.chamberlain@alaska.gov>; Alloway, Jessie M (LAW) <jessie.alloway@alaska.gov>
Subject: Re: Confidential request for Department of Law Opinion on Ethics Disclosure

Hi Curtis,

Thank you for sending this in. We will review and get back to you with an advisory opinion. The Ethics Act gives 60 days from the point of a complete request for us to provide an advisory opinion. But if the board is going to take action sooner than that, please let us know.

Best,
Matt

From: Chamberlain, Curtis S (DFG) <curt.chamberlain@alaska.gov>
Sent: Thursday, July 23, 2026 10:46 AM
To: Alloway, Jessie M (LAW) <jessie.alloway@alaska.gov>; Stinson, Matthew P (LAW) <matthew.stinson@alaska.gov>; Lee, Edward C (LAW) <edward.lee@alaska.gov>
Subject: Confidential request for Department of Law Opinion on Ethics Disclosure

Jessie, Matt, and Eddie,

I anticipate that, in quick order, further board action will take place to review the proposals which were voided pursuant to the Department of Law's Order of Corrective Action, dated May 19, 2026. Please consider this my request under AS 39.52.240 for an advisory opinion regarding my ethics disclosure and objections thereto related to and in anticipation of the Alaska Peninsula/ Aleutian Island/ Chignik Finfish proposals voided on May 19, 2026. I hope to further address and clarify the Department of Law's allegations and determinations of incompleteness or misleading statements I may have made in the February 2026 Alaska Peninsula/ Aleutian Island/ Chignik Finfish meeting (hereinafter referred to as the AP meeting) and ask that the department revisit and revise its May 19 opinion. I incorporate for reference RC004, 139, the approximately three hours of discussion and statements surrounding my ethics disclosure, correspondence with the Department of Law surrounding the Ethics Complaint filed regarding my statements in the AP meeting (hereinafter referred to as the Ethics Complaint), the

statements made herein, the sources cited herein, and any additional information the Department of Law may find appropriate. If the Department has any questions, please feel free to inquire further. My questions are as follows:

Driftnet Permit for the middle Kuskokwim: My father owns a drift net permit on the middle Kuskokwim. I last fished it in the summer of 1994, and I believe the permit was last fished in 1995 or 1996, when the combination of fishing closures and processors pulling out caused the closure of the Middle Kuskokwim fishery. The lower river fishery limped along for about a decade until the last of the processors pulled out and fishing opportunity was eliminated. Even in the years where there were processors in the lower Kuskokwim, the fish runs could not support the cost of gas to make the trip to the lower Kuskokwim. There has been no reasonable opportunity for commercial fishing in decades, and my father hasn't been able to even give his permit away. It is common for fishermen on the Kuskokwim to state their permit is not worth the paper it is printed on. My father is one of them. Neither I, my siblings, nor any of my children have expressed any interest in continuing commercial fishing or holding the permit.

Question: Does my father's possession of this permit create an impermissible financial conflict of interest for me?

Employment and Advocacy through Calista Corporation: I am employed as Deputy General Counsel for Calista Corporation. Calista Corporation is a regional Alaska Native Corporation created under the Alaska Native Claims settlement act. Calista has more than 39,500 shareholders living across the world, including on the Aleutian Peninsula. Calista employs over 5,000 people worldwide and has annual revenues well over \$1 billion. Calista operates with over 100 subsidiaries, primarily in the areas of government contracting (aerospace and defense), heavy civil construction, oilfield services, and real estate. I was brought to Calista for my experience as a trial attorney and owner of a law firm focusing on civil litigation and business law. My title prior to becoming Deputy General Counsel was Assistant General Counsel: Corporate Governance and Litigation. As my prior job title suggests, my expertise is not and has never been fisheries. However, I volunteered to advocate in fisheries, as I had a background in commercial, sport, and subsistence fisheries. I want to be clear. Calista does not have an interest in fisheries and generates no revenue related to fisheries. With respect to the area M fisheries, Calista and I will receive no financial or personal benefit based on any of the proposals before the board of fisheries.

Calista has advocated for responsible fisheries management, including but not limited to time and area restrictions for area M. Since it has no commercial interests in Alaska's fisheries, Calista's advocacy was pure political speech. Calista merely having an opinion on a public matter does not create a conflict of interest where Calista has no commercial interest at stake and is not paying me to obtain any particular result. To that end, Calista has never engaged me in any regulatory discussions related to any matters before the Board of Fisheries, let alone advocated for or against any proposal before the board.

Growing up in the Calista region, my views largely align with those within the region. As such, my views largely align with those of Calista when it comes to fisheries management. In 2023 I volunteered to take on drafting and speaking for Calista in the fisheries space. This participation was permissive and not tied to my employment metrics. Similarly, my application for and participation in the Board of Fisheries was

permissive. None of my employment metrics were tied to participation in the board of fisheries or any proposals before it. Though I drafted two letters for Calista for the board of fisheries and put those statements through the protocol group, all the opinions expressed were my own. In no other statements regarding fisheries did Calista seek to influence my opinions or insist I take any position. Since I joined the Board of Fisheries, Calista has ceased all regulatory advocacy in state and federal water fisheries.

With respect to a prior question as to whether I ever advocated, either in a personal or professional capacity, for the closure of the Area M fishery, my answer remains no. I am precise in my language and did not take this question lightly. I reviewed my statements and the facts surrounding my testimony as soon as the written objection was made to ensure my response to the anticipated question would be accurate. I have individually and on behalf of Calista advocated for time and area restrictions for Area M. However, those are a far cry from advocating for closure.

To the best of my recollection, the only time and area reduction I have advocated for in Area M was in 2023, where I drafted a written position on behalf of Calista and offered verbal testimony for reduction in time and area in the month of June where high abundances of AYK salmon were present and increased time and area where AKY salmon abundance was low. Even under the most generous of observations, this cannot be construed as advocating for closing Area M. I did state that the board had chronically mismanaged Alaska Salmon stocks, including Yukon Chum. This was based on facts present prior to the 2023 meeting, and not reflective of the facts before the board in 2026.

I did testify as an invited fact witness on a bill that would have imposed restrictions on the Area M fishery for the month of June. I framed my testimony as fact testimony, as I was originally asked to speak as a legal expert on this bill. I did not feel sufficiently qualified to speak as an expert on this area of law, so I declined but volunteered to speak to specific facts which were included in my testimony. I at no point stated that this was not advocacy, as my purpose in this hearing was to inform legislators of the salmon crash's impact on Yukon and Kuskokwim residents, as well as the comparative diversity of the Aleutian peninsula fishery. I did not expressly advocate for or against passage of this bill, but I intended to put the facts before the legislature in hopes of contributing to meaningful change through future legislation. In its May 19, 2026 Order of Corrective Action, the Department of Law presumed an intent and meaning that was not there. I believe this to be personal testimony as the testimony was personal knowledge and not run through Calista communication protocols. This testimony was available to all board members well before my initial ethics disclosure took place. Even if I had advocated for passage of SB 128, this would not have necessitated a yes response to the question posed by member Carpenter. SB 128 would have imposed some restrictions on the Area M fishery in the month of June, a period of roughly three weeks. However, the Area M fishery operates through the month of September. As such, SB 128 would have reduced time in the Area M fishery by approximately 20% but not closed it. I stand behind the truth, accuracy and completeness of my statements.

With respect to Calista's positions, the Department of Law again presumed misleading testimony where none exists. Without waving attorney-client and work-product privileges, I can affirm Calista has taken steps not to interfere in any regulatory matters before the board. To this point, Calista has not taken any positions or offered oral or written testimony on any regulatory matters before the Board of Fisheries or The North Pacific Fisheries Management Council since my nomination. As I stated in my disclosure, Calista has advocated for subsistence rights under state law, an amendment to the Alaska Native Claims

Settlement Act, and to restore aboriginal hunting and fishing rights for Alaska Natives. I participated in those discussions, but it is important to note that these discussions are broad in scope and not tied to any positions before the board of fisheries. With respect to support of a subsistence priority, this seeks to implement as a constitutional amendment that is already codified under state law and will not meaningfully change any regulations. This position is supported by public polls of between 75% and 85% favorability. There were at no times relevant any pending constitutional amendments before the legislature relevant to this position. With respect to restoration of Alaska Native Subsistence rights and amendments to the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, this position is more conceptual rather than concrete. As part of AFN's response to Proposal 24-1, Calista has participated in discussions addressing this issue. However, there is not even consensus on what restoration of Alaska Native fishing and hunting rights means, let alone a concrete legislative mechanism to restore it. This position is broadly supported by public polling indicating upwards of 75% support and by the fact that Proposal 24-1 overwhelmingly passed AFN's floor vote in 2004. I appreciate that the Department of Law had questions about the scope of my role in "subsistence priority" issues on behalf of Calista, but I am dismayed that the Department chose not to issue a single question pertinent to this issue, or to follow up despite my invitation to do so. Instead, the Department, without inquiry, presumed a conflict that did not exist.

The Department of Law points to Calista's quote before the Alaska Federation of Natives on October 20, 2023. First, it is important to note that I was selected to speak on subsistence issues by the Yukon Kuskokwim caucus for AFN, not Calista. I was selected with about an hour notice to draft comments, and I prepared them without external review. While Calista did publish my comments, so did numerous newspapers and outlets throughout the state and nationwide. Overall, I was one of 60 speakers selected to speak on this topic, which was a precursor to the Passage of Proposal 24-1. This testimony was personal in nature. The fact that it aligns with any of the over 200 Alaska Native organizations that hold similar positions does not assign ownership and responsibility for those comments to any of them. This position is hardly unique for any individual, particularly one who grew up living a subsistence lifestyle. I am proud that Calista chose to feature my comments, but that doesn't make them not mine.

It was deeply disturbing that the Complainants chose to feature a photo of my children in the Record Copy attacking me. In doing so, the Complainants caused my children and my spouse a lot of mental distress and worked to undermine my efforts to encourage my children to open themselves up to cultural and native issues. They have since expressed a reluctance to attend and participate in cultural events with me out of fear of reprisal or negative portrayals. I would strongly suggest the Board of Fish add safeguards to prevent this type of attack in the future.

Finally, it is important to note for the record that all public speaking instances took place prior to the commencement of my service on the Board of Fisheries and were fully provided to the board prior to my ethics disclosure. Furthermore, my ethics disclosure and subsequent conversations surrounding the same involved 2.5-3 hours of questions and answers, as well as hundreds of pages of documents. This amounted to a fishing expedition for statements that could potentially trip up a board member because he or she didn't answer the way the department of law unilaterally decided they should answer, opening the door to overly broad and unduly burdensome questions and lines of attacks. This will open the door to a flurry of baseless ethics complaints to board members and political interference.

I wish to pay particular attention to the Department's focus on whether my testimony on SB 128 was advocacy in nature, a position I never held. This testimony took place before my tenure on the Board of

Fisheries. Under the Department of Law's prior guidance, I could have openly supported SB 128, as it contained a position widely supported by a large class of individuals. SB 128 had wide support, including Tanana Chiefs Conference which comprised of over 40 Alaska Native Village Corporations and tens of thousands of individuals. Accordingly, any question as to whether I advocated for this position would have been irrelevant, as an affirmative response would not have created an impermissible conflict. Nonetheless, the Department of Law voided 5 substantive proposals, based on a legislation I didn't support, purported statements I didn't make, and a meaning that was not conveyed. This in turn led to ADF&G invalidating all of that meeting's actions.

The department of Law's interpretation can have a long-term chilling effect on Alaska Native voices, as any statements an Alaska Native makes may potentially invalidate any actions related to that statement. There were hundreds of Alaska Natives and Alaska Native organizations and communities that expended considerable time and resources to attend this meeting, only to have the Department of Law void the Board's actions based on superfluous statements in response to baseless allegations by a minority group. Subsistence does not generate revenue, and it is difficult to mobilize voices to travel at considerable cost to Anchorage and espouse views that have until 2026 been disregarded by the board. Alaska Native organizations, as representatives of those people, espouse those values and advocate for their tribal members, shareholders, and members. Alaska Native organizations employ tens of thousands of people, but for the most part, do not generate revenue in commercial fishing. The department's position espoused in its Order of Corrective Action will cause an unconstitutional chilling effect on all Alaska Native voices in the future. Even worse, this will encourage disruptive and unconscionable behavior by organizations seeking to bypass the Board's legislatively delegated authority. I respectfully request that the Department clarify the rules related to employment within an Alaska Native organization and how the rules apply to commercial versus political speech.

Questions:

Does the Department of law hold an opinion that I have an impermissible conflict of interest related to my employment at Calista Corporation?

Does my disclosure satisfy the department's request for additional information pursuant to AS 3.52.430(c) and AS 39.52.3309? If not, please identify what additional information the Department would like.

Please clarify the rules related to Alaska Native organizations engaging in political speech (versus commercial speech) and employee participation in the Board of Fisheries.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter. I look forward to your timely response.

Kindest Regards

Curt Chamberlain



Fw: Process Questions for the Department of Law

From Chamberlain, Curtis S (DFG) <curt.chamberlain@alaska.gov>

Date Thu 9/17/2026 10:38 AM

To Curt Chamberlain <cchamberlain@calistacorp.com>

From: Alloway, Jessie M (LAW) <jessie.alloway@alaska.gov>

Sent: Wednesday, September 16, 2026 11:27 AM

To: Chamberlain, Curtis S (DFG) <curt.chamberlain@alaska.gov>; Stinson, Matthew P (LAW) <matthew.stinson@alaska.gov>; Lee, Edward C (LAW) <edward.lee@alaska.gov>

Cc: Carlson-Van Dort, Marit K (DFG) <marit.carlson-vandort@alaska.gov>

Subject: Re: Process Questions for the Department of Law

Curtis-

Thank you for your questions and your patience.

There are a number of ways in which the responsibilities of a government attorney differ from those in private practice. The Alaska Rules of Professional Conduct recognizes this. The preamble explains:

Under various legal provisions, including constitutional, statutory, and common law, the responsibilities of government lawyers may include authority concerning legal matters that ordinarily reposes in the client in private client-lawyer relationships. For example, a lawyer for a government agency may have authority on behalf of the government to decide upon settlement or whether to appeal from an adverse judgment. Such authority in various respects is generally vested in the attorney general and the state's attorney in state government, and their federal counterparts, and the same may be true of other government law officers. Also, lawyers under the supervision of these officers may be authorized to represent several government agencies in intragovernmental legal controversies in circumstances where a private lawyer could not represent multiple private clients. They also may have authority to represent the "public interest" in circumstances where a private lawyer would not be authorized to do so. These Rules do not abrogate any such authority. *See Botelho v. Griffin*, 25 P.3d 689 (Alaska 2001).

This distinction is foundational to understanding how the Department of Law's role differs from that of private counsel and why certain decisions rest with the attorney general rather than with individual agencies.

Alaska Statute 44.23.020(b)(3) provides that the attorney general shall "represent the state in all civil actions in which the state is a party." Subsection (d) further authorizes the attorney general, subject to legislative power, to settle actions, cases, and offenses. This authority applies uniformly to all state agencies, including the Board of Fisheries.

The attorney general has additional responsibilities under the Ethics Act. She must provide advisory opinions when requested, and she must review any complaint filed by a public official under the Ethics Act. Determining whether an Ethics Act violation has occurred, and what remedial action is required is part of these statutory duties.

The Department of Law strives to consult with client agencies and to seek their feedback whenever feasible. At the same time, the attorney general's independent statutory responsibilities sometimes require timely action even when consultation is not possible or when agencies hold differing views. These circumstances can arise in both litigation and Ethics Act matters.

The Department of Law advises both the Board of Fisheries and the Department of Fish and Game. We understand that sometimes the Department of Fish and Game may oppose a proposal ultimately adopted by the Board, but once the Board takes action, that becomes the final agency action. The Department of Law will serve as legal counsel for the Board in any litigation that may arise, which is always subject to the attorney general's authority to settle such litigation. In your email, you reference Rule 5.4(c)(3) but there is no Rule 5.4(c)(3) within the Alaska Rules of Professional Conduct. If you intended to refer to Rule 5.4(c) or another provision, we would be glad to clarify.

The situation that arose in this case was unusual. To help prevent similar issues in the future, we strongly encourage Board members to proactively consult with the Department's Ethics Attorney before meetings. Our goal is both to protect individual Board members and to safeguard Board processes so that we can provide the strongest possible defense should Board actions be challenged.

As I am not the agency attorney or the regulations attorney, my comments and responses are only in relation to the Professional Rules of Conduct and the Ethics Act. The Department of Law also has an independent statutory role in the regulations process. Insofar as any of your questions relate to that, I would refer you to your Board attorney, Eddie Lee.

Jessie Alloway

Assistant Attorney General
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1031 W. 4th Avenue #200
Anchorage, AK 99501
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From: Chamberlain, Curtis S (DFG) <curt.chamberlain@alaska.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, July 22, 2026 1:00 PM
To: Alloway, Jessie M (LAW) <jessie.alloway@alaska.gov>; Stinson, Matthew P (LAW) <matthew.stinson@alaska.gov>; Lee, Edward C (LAW) <edward.lee@alaska.gov>
Cc: Carlson-Van Dort, Marit K (DFG) <marit.carlson-vandort@alaska.gov>
Subject: Process Questions for the Department of Law

Good afternoon, Jessie, Matt, and Eddie.

Following the Department of Law's actions in the lawsuit surrounding the Area M meetings this spring, I wanted to ask some process questions to guide the board's future actions and reliance on the department of law as counsel.

The department of law has held itself out as the board's legal counsel. However, following the February 2026 Alaska Peninsula/ Aleutian Island/ Chignik Finfish meeting, the department of law took numerous actions, including voiding actions and settling a lawsuit without consulting or obtaining the Board of Fisheries' consent. Please advise how Rules 1.2(a), 1.3, 1.4(a) of the

Alaska Rules of Professional Conduct apply when it comes to representation of the board of fisheries, particularly where it applies to abiding a client's decisions and wishes.

The department of law holds itself out as the Board of Fisheries' lawyer. However, the Department of Law also advises the Department of Fish and Game. In many proposals passed in the last year, the Board took actions opposed by the department. How does the Department of Law resolve conflicts in a legal dispute when the board and department oppose each other on proposals or actions.

Article VIII, Sections 1-3 of the Alaska Constitution gives the legislature the authority to provide for the utilization, development and conservation of natural resources for the maximum benefit of the people. The legislature created the board as a quasi-legislative body established for conservation and development of game resources and gave the board the power and duties to enact regulations. If the Board of Fisheries was created by legislative delegation, how does Alaska Rule of Professional Conduct Rule 5.4 (c)(3) affect Department of Law's ability to render services and make decisions where the board's actions are opposed by either the executive branch or the Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

In the absence of finding a violation of an ethics rule or an actual (not implied) conflict of interest, does the department of law have the authority to void board actions? What level of violation is needed to void a board action? Is there a materiality requirement regarding any failure to disclose, or does a failure on a non-material issue give cause to void board actions?

Thank you for your time and attention to these questions, as well as for your anticipated response.

Kindest regards,

Curt Chamberlain

Board Member Chamberlain

Ethics Materials

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Ethics Discussions during Executive Session

LC

Lee, Edward C (LAW)

To: Chamberlain, Curtis S (DFG)

Tue 10/27/2026 9:26 PM

 Order of Corrective Action.pdf 
327 KB

Curtis,

I received a notification from a Board member tonight that they were going to motion for an executive session tomorrow to discuss your ethics disclosure, specifically for the purposes of the Area M ACRs. After seeking clarification from Jessie and the AG, it has been determined that the Board may review the attached Order for Corrective Action for the purpose of determining whether to object to any decisions made by your ethics supervisor as it relates to your ability to participate in the Area M ACRs on Thursday. Under AS 44.62.310(c), information in this Order is confidential and could subject you to reputational prejudice. Therefore, you have a choice of whether to keep the matter confidential or discuss it publicly. In any event, the Board will receive hard copies of the attached Order during executive session (if the motion carries), review it, and may ask you questions related to it. At the end of the ES, the hard copies will be collected and may not be disclosed to the public unless you waive your confidentiality privileges.

Let me know if you have any questions.

Thanks,

Edward C. Lee
Assistant Attorney General
Natural Resources Section
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 Reply  Forward