

My name is Robert Cassell. I am currently a member of the Matanuska Valley Fish and Game Advisory Committee and Vice President of Resident Hunters of Alaska. I considered not even testifying knowing the history of this board favoring commercial hunting/guiding business interests. This is my personal testimony. I am reminded of my testimony and proposal rejected by this board for brown bear allocation on Kodiak Island which favors guided non-resident hunters over the people that live in Alaska. That issue continues, and I expect a decision from the Alaska Supreme Court this year. I recently returned from Juneau where I met with one third of the legislature over issues with this board and also discussed how commercial interests have undue control over the Board of Fish. I see a bill now being advanced to affect needed changes on how these boards are appointed to limit the undue influence by commercial interests. Thus my testimony. There are many ways to affect how Fish and Game resources are allocated and Unit 19 Dall sheep is one to be decided at this meeting. If this board decides to close the resident hunting season for Dall sheep under the guise of conservation concerns when recently guided non-resident hunters killed 90% of the sheep harvest in Unit 19, the bias of this board will be clear. It will energize the movement to put ALL non-resident sheep hunters on drawing permits not just Unit 19. I applaud Representative Jimmie's efforts to what ultimately is an allocation issue being solved legislatively. The pendulum is swinging with Resident Hunter of Alaska now over 3,500 members (their annual Anchorage fund raising banquet was here last night). One of RHAK's main goals is to preserve Dall sheep hunting for the next generations of Alaskans. I am asking this board to protect and preserve for Alaskan's first. If limited harvest is needed, either reduce non-resident seasons or limit non-resident opportunities (as in proposal 108). Thank you.