



# Alaska State Legislature

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**Sponsor:** Senator Ben Stevens  
**Current Version:** HCS CSSB 93 (FIN)  
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## Fact Sheet for: Senate Bill 93

**Short Title:** FISHING PERMIT AND VESSEL LICENSE FEES

### Summary:

- Complies with recent rulings in *Carlson v. State of Alaska* to clarify that the non-residential fee differential for commercial fishing permits is charged "per person" rather than "per permit."
- Charges non-residents who meet low income standards and qualify for the reduced permit fee the full allowable non-resident differential.
- Increases the cap on the base fee that the Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission (CFEC) may charge for annual renewal of permits from \$300 to \$3,000. The current cap places an artificial ceiling on the fee structure. Removing the cap allows for a fairer fee structure that more fully complies with the mandate that fees reflect the value of respective fisheries.
- Adds 13 vessel length categories in 25 foot increments and raises the fees for the categories.
- Authorizes CFEC to charge reasonable fees for initial issuance and replacement of number plates and annual vessel license renewal stickers.

### Benefits:

- Provides additional funds for the operations of the CFEC.
- Brings Alaska statutes into compliance with the State Supreme Court decision in *Carlson v. State of Alaska*.
- Allows permit renewal fee structure to more reasonably reflect the economic return of fisheries.

### Background:

- In 2001, the legislature passed legislation to bring the state into compliance with a State Supreme Court decision in the *Carlson v. State of Alaska* class action brought by non-resident fishermen challenging the state's fee structure charging higher commercial fishing license and permit fees to non-residents. Because certain aspects of the case were still under appeal at that time, the legislature recognized that further legislation would likely be required. While much of *Carlson* remains under appeal, a recent decision requires immediate legislative action to clarify the statutory language regarding the non-resident differential. This revision and other factors are decreasing revenues generated from commercial fishing fees to the point that the CFEC can no longer cover its budget from receipts. The existing \$300 cap has artificially held down the fees charged despite the substantial economic value of the fisheries affected.