

From: [Avi J. Friedman](#)
To: [Commission, Boundary \(CED sponsored\)](#)
Subject: Re City of Dillingham Petition
Date: Sunday, August 23, 2015 8:04:28 PM

This is in response to the filing by the City of Dillingham for Legislative Review Annexation. Approval of the proposed annexation will mean the collection of raw fish tax by the City, in several proposed outlying areas, including Ekuk Beach.

I have been a set net fisherman at Ekuk Beach for 30 years. I have come to know and love a number of people in Dillingham. I am now an out-of-state fisherman, and that is not illegal, nor is it unethical or immoral. Out-of-staters are prone to receive criticism for that very reason, under the assumption that they contribute nothing, and remove local wealth to outside areas.

Prior to my first year of fishing in 1986, I worked for the Alaska Department of Fish and Game as a Fisheries Biologist in Kodiak for the better part of 7 years. If working in the State Civil Service can be considered a contribution to the State, then I have been a contributor to that extent.

Additionally, I have for 20 years brought some of my own salmon back to my home in Baltimore, MD to sell myself, via my small processing facility at Ekuk which I conceived and built single-handedly. I have over 1,000 customers who are dedicated to Ekuk Beach, AK salmon, to the exclusion of any other salmon in the world regardless of price, because my customers tell me so. They love Alaska because of my efforts to bring them the goodness and purity of Ekuk Beach salmon. I know of at least 10 customers (I am sure there are more) who have traveled to Alaska because of my communications to them about the fishery, what Alaska is like, so that is also a contribution to the State. I have created a lot of good will towards the State of Alaska. As an out-of-stater.

The City now tells me that Ekuk Beach fishermen are a financial burden in that City monies are spent on local police, fire, small boat harbor, etc. services. I ask the City to present data that show that any Ekuk Beach fisherman consuming these City services are not already City of Dillingham residents - and that they consume these City services while they are in the City, not at Ekuk Beach.

Personally, I am not aware that I consume any City services whatsoever. I do fly into and out of the airport, often via local air taxi operations, but is that not mostly a Federal project?

The City is telling Ekuk Beach fishermen that they must help financially support the City via a proposed raw fish tax because City finances are low, but Ekuk Beach fishermen consume no City services that I am aware of, nor has the City ever mentioned one City service that they will provide to Ekuk Beach fishermen out at Ekuk. That seems like a one-way flow of tax monies from Ekuk Beach fishermen to the City of Dillingham, with nothing in return for taxes paid.

Ekuk Beach fishermen are not responsible for the City of Dillingham's finances. Where are the data to show that Ekuk Beach fishermen are responsible for City costs of providing City services to City residents inside present City boundaries?

I used to spend 2-4K dollars prior to every fishing season, inside the City at local vendors, prior to the fishing season. Of course I paid a City sales tax and contributed (not consumed) to City finances in

that way. I was happy to do it, which is why I did it.

The City is now alienating people that otherwise love the City. Is it not a fact that approximately 50% of Dillingham residents contribute zero property tax monies to the City in which they live as residents? Is it reasonable to ask anyone (resident or not) who is a net contributor to City and State finances, to subsidize City finances when about 50% of City residents themselves do not support themselves in ways that residents almost everywhere else do? I can tell you that I am spending less money inside the City now than I used to, because the City has made me feel as if I am unwelcome.

I am not happy about that as I do want the City to do well, but under reasonable terms, and declaring that Ekuk Beach fishermen are part of the reason why City finances are low - without publishing any data proving that assertion - is not particularly reasonable.

If the City can provide data, I will have an open mind about it. I appreciate the opportunity to express my thoughts on this matter.

Yours, Avi J. Friedman