

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE



REPRESENTATIVE ANDY JOSEPHSON

Sponsor Statement

HB 105 – Denali Wolf Buffer Zone

To protect wolves for future Alaskans and visitors, HB 105 would prohibit wolf hunting and trapping in two areas adjacent to Denali National Park & Preserve: The Wolf Townships (AKA The Stampede Trail) and the Nenana Canyon.

Visitors consistently tell Park managers that they want to see wild wolves, but few people get to see the iconic predators in Denali these days. Wolf sightings have declined dramatically.

For many years, Denali National Park had been known as one of the best places in the world to view wild wolves—and this pumped money into Alaska’s economy. In 2016, Denali hosted 599,822 visitors who spent approximately \$604,800.

The Board of Game established a buffer zone on the park’s eastern boundary in 2000, but they eliminated that buffer in 2010. In 2014, less than 6% of park visitors were able to see wolves, a decrease from 45% from 2010. Wolf population in DNP&P has declined from 116 in spring 2006 to 50 in spring 2014.

House Bill 105 helps to correct these trends. This entire state benefits from Denali National Park & Preserve, our most important tourism asset. Please join me in assuring that Alaskans and visitors for generations to come can be moved by seeing wild wolves there.